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HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
BOSTON AND NEW YORK

JOURNALS
OF
RALPH WALDO EMERSON
1820–1872

VOL. I

R. W. Emerson.

JOURNALS
OF
RALPH WALDO EMERSON

WITH ANNOTATIONS

EDITED BY

EDWARD WALDO EMERSON

AND

[illegible]

1820–1824

BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
The Riverside Press Cambridge

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Published November 1909

INTRODUCTION

In the year 1902 Messrs. Houghton, Mifflin and Company asked me whether Mr. Emerson's journals could not be published, to follow the annotated edition of the Works which they were to bring out in honour of the approaching Centenary. This question was referred to Mr. Cabot, whom Mr. Emerson, trusting to his good judgment and taste, had made his literary executor. Mr. Cabot, after a little consideration, said "Yes." Many persons, he agreed, would gladly see Emerson's first record of his thoughts, come nearer to the man than in the essays carefully purged of personality, and also trace the growth of his powers of expression in prose or rhyme, and the expansion of his mind during the fifty years or more that the journals cover.

Mr. Cabot said that he was too old to undertake further literary work, and expressed his wish that I should be the editor: "Only take time enough," he said; "do not allow yourself to be hurried." A few months later, Mr. Cabot died. I was deprived of his important and valued counsel.

The journals were postponed until the Centenary Edition with its additions and notes was published; then the consideration of them began. Mr. Emerson's grandson, Mr. Waldo Emerson Forbes, expressed his willingness to share the labour of editing the journals. This aid has been of great importance.

At first the plan included only the journals from the time of Mr. Emerson's new departure in life and writing after his return from his first visit to Europe in the autumn of 1833; but, on carefully reading the journals for the fourteen years preceding that time, — for the boy faithfully kept them from the age of seventeen onwards, — it seemed well to the editors to introduce large extracts from these. Before deciding to do so, however, they showed specimens of the boyish entries to several persons in whose taste and literary judgment they confided, and were confirmed in the plan by their less partial opinions. For we believe that those who care about Emerson, his thought and ideals, may wish to look beyond the matured and sifted work that he left in his books, and see the youth in his apprenticeship, the priest in his noviciate and in his full office caring for his people; his studies, questionings and hopes;

his final sacrifice; meantime, the warmth and tenderness that came into this monastic life with his love for Ellen Tucker and his marriage, soon followed by her death and the sad wreck of the new home; then, after the parting with his church, the pilgrimage over-sea to restore his health and see certain men whose written words had helped him.

The extracts from the early journals are not chosen for their merit alone: they show the soil out of which Emerson grew, the atmosphere around, his habits and mental food, his doubts, his steady, earnest purpose, and the things he outgrew. His frankness with himself is seen, and how he granted the floor to the adversary for a fair hearing. Also the ups and downs of the boy's health appear in the school-keeping days, and why, beyond all reasonable hope, considering the neglect of the body, he lived to a healthy middle life and old age by his rambling tendencies, by quietness, and bending to the blast which shattered the health of his more unyielding brothers.

In these years the young Emerson was reading eagerly and widely, and learned to find what the author or the college text-book had *for him*, and leave the rest. The growth of his literary

taste, his style, independence of thought, and originality in writing verse can be traced.

But from first to last appears the value to him of his strange aunt, Miss Mary Moody Emerson, in her constant interest and stimulating influence: poor, remote, only self-educated, hungry for knowledge, extraordinarily well-read, exalted in her religious thought, critical but proud of her nephews, especially Ralph, and a tireless correspondent. The boy prized her letters, and they put him on his mettle. His most careful youthful writing is in his answers; he holds his own in them. Large extracts from her letters and his answers occur, especially in the earlier journals. He admired her rhetoric, now poetical, now fiery, now sarcastic, — always her own.

It was Mr. Emerson's habit often in later years to copy into his journal passages from his letters to others in which he had conveyed his thought with care.

It was as natural to this boy to write as to another to play ball, or go fishing, or experiment with the tools of a neighbour carpenter, or feel out tunes on a musical instrument. When recitations were over, and study did not press, or he was not walking in Mount Auburn woods

or the wild country around Fresh Pond, he betook himself to his journal. It was his confidential friend: his ambitions, his disappointments, his religious meditations, his mortifications, his romantic imaginings, his sillinesses, his trial-flights in verse, his joy in Byron and Scott, or Everett's orations, the ideas gathered from serious books, — all went in, everything but what might be expected in a boy's diary; for of incidents, of classmates, of students' doings, there is hardly an entry.[1]

Throughout, and increasingly in later years, these are journals, not of incidents and persons, but of thoughts.

With the biography of Mr. Emerson in mind or in hand, the outward conditions, or relations with people or public events which suggested a train of thought, may perhaps be found. A talk, or ramble with a friend, or the reading of a book, may be mentioned, but soon the thought takes its own direction. More often the thoughts were on the great, the abiding questions.

The journals of exile in Florida and of the

1 On this account it seemed well to introduce the annals of the Pythologian Club, of which Emerson was Secretary, giving a flavour of the students' life at that time and his part in it.

visit to Europe in 1833 are exceptional, as being real records of daily life, of voyages in a packet ship, of sight-seeing, of travel in Malta, Sicily, the Italian cities, through the Brenner Pass, to Paris, the sights as well as thoughts there; then of the visits in England, and the voyage home. Much of the account of the visits to Landor, Coleridge, Wordsworth, and Carlyle is omitted in these volumes, as it is printed in *English Traits*. The notes of the second trip abroad are less full. Mr. Emerson printed many of them in that book, and others have been given in the notes to that volume in the Centenary Edition. During his third journeying abroad, in 1871–72, when, sent by his friends, Mr. Emerson visited England, France, Italy and Egypt, he took no notes, as his health and spirits were far below their usual standard.

After 1833, the journals are of greater interest, for Mr. Emerson was entering on a new life and founding his new home, whither he brought his wife, Lidian Jackson, and where their children were born. One finds the mention of the planting of trees, the gradually added fields, orchard, and — best for him — woodland by Walden. Turning his back on tradition, he sought the living God in Nature

and the soul. The book *Nature* sped well and was soon published. Day by day, the journal was the storehouse of the thoughts given him in the wood.

> Wandering voices in the air
> And murmurs in the wold
> Speak what I cannot declare,
> Yet cannot all withhold.

These journals are reflections, sometimes dim, sometimes clear, of the inner life as stirred by the outer. The study of Nature led to increasing interest in Natural History, but always as a key to unlock chambers of thought. The first lectures after his European trip were on this subject.

Mr. Emerson often preached by invitation in various towns for several years, with good acceptance. But when, in 1837 and 1838, he spoke for free thought in letters and religion before chosen audiences gathered at the University, reaction followed and he stood condemned by many of the elder professors, clergy, and leading citizens, as visionary, dangerous, or insane. The journals show that, however bravely Mr. Emerson stood against the tide which then looked so strong, it seemed at the time as if he might be outlawed as speaker and writer, and

have to turn to the soil for a living. The event quickly did away with such a fear. Societies at country colleges, apparently unaware of his heresies, asked him, year by year, to speak to them ; his Boston lectures won him increasing audiences, and new friends, and the spread of the Lyceums from East to West gave him a hearing wide as could be desired. The bases of these lectures, which, thus tested and sifted, became the essays, came from these day-book entries of thoughts, sights, experiences, and the fine passages of his reading.

Now new friends appear one by one: the young Thoreau, loyal and skilful helper in all practical matters, yet keeping his fine independence, the Platonic Alcott, Jones Very the mystic, Father Taylor, Dr. Hedge, and always the beautiful and sisterly presence of Miss Elizabeth Hoar, who should have been the wife of Charles Emerson. The new home had been saddened by the death of the two brilliant younger brothers, Edward fading away in Porto Rico, and Charles, not two years later, in Concord. A few years later Samuel Gray Ward is often alluded to, to whom the "Letters to a Friend" were written; then Margaret Fuller came, and Charles Newcomb from Providence, a youth

for whom Emerson cared much, and later, Ellery Channing and Hawthorne became his neighbours.

The earlier friends, of course, appear: the venerable Doctor Ripley and his beneficent son Rev. Samuel, of Waltham, his gifted wife, Sarah Bradford, and her brother George, whom Mr. Cabot speaks of as the only "crony" that Mr. Emerson ever had. At this period Waldo, the little son so soon to be taken away, comes into the Journal, a delight to his father.

The Transcendental Epoch meantime comes on, with its star-led souls, but also many reformers of small and strange pattern, uncomfortable creatures who had hitched their wagons to the smallest asteroids. These were hospitably heard and fed,— Mr. Emerson's humanity, as appears in the journals, helped out by his sense of humour. Always the friend across the sea, Carlyle, remains a planet in his heaven, though sometimes with smoky and lurid light.

Goethe's wide range of thought was stimulating, especially in the domain of Art, but the New England conscience could not accept the man.

A little earlier than the days of the *Dial*, the Neo-platonists stirred Mr. Emerson by their

mysticism and strange imagery, and from them he followed upward the stream of thought that had influenced these to their remote sources in the scriptures of the ancient East. He found delight by the way in the gardens of Persia, with Saadi and Hafiz. In the verse-books many trial-renderings of their poems (from the German) are found. Traces of all these influences appear in his notes.

In 1848, Mr. Emerson, setting his face towards home after his stay in England, wrote "Boundless freedom in America," but was forced to add "in the North," for from that time on for thirteen years the cloud of Slavery grew darker, and the attitude of Northern politicians and merchants was sadly subservient, while the "comfortable classes" seemed indifferent, even the clergy and the scholars. Certain of the journals show how heavily the load of the Country's shame lay on Emerson, and in them are found his notes of opinions given by great men of law, which he had sought out, on the basal rights of man and the supremacy of the moral law. In these days, although he well knew that the law of Compensation was sleeplessly working, out of sight — already the rifts made by Conscience were running through

the parties, — its slow action tried even his brave philosophy. He saw too far to devote his life to abate this special evil, but his aid was never wanting at a time of danger, as a strong ally to those brave men who did. Loyal to the ideal Republic, disregarding coldness or hostility, there was no tremor in his voice as it rang out clearly for the eternal rights. In those years he had the relief each winter, given by his lecturing journeys afar, of seeing the new country of youth and courage, and speaking a word for Freedom as he passed.

The war came, and he rejoiced in the clearing of the heavens once more, though grieving at the wreck left by the cruel storm. In the journal of January, 1862, when Mr. Emerson gave before the Smithsonian Institute in Washington his lecture "Civilization at a Pinch," in which he earnestly urged Emancipation, he wrote out, in detail unusual for him, the story of his meeting President Lincoln, Seward, Chase, Sumner, and others of the leading actors in the great drama.

Peace returned, and the Country seemed one to be proud of as never before. Mr. Emerson's relief and his high hopes appear in the journals, and reappear in the poems and later

essays. Then began a calmer, pleasanter chapter in his life. Years ago he had "planted himself on his thought," and now "the world had come round to him." He was now widely known on both sides of the ocean through his words and work, and welcomed as a helper. But the increasing call for lectures from a newer West beyond the Mississippi allowed no abatement of work, and the journeying, though less exposing, was greater. His material was still accumulating, but the arrangement of the choice pieces into a harmonious mosaic was growing more difficult than ever for him. One day he met the God of Bounds, who said, —

> No more !
> No farther shoot
> Thy broad, ambitious branches and thy root.
> Fancy departs: no more invent;
> Contract thy firmament
> To compass of a tent.
> . . . . . .
> A little while
> Still plan and smile,
> And — fault of novel germs —
> Mature the unfallen fruit.

"Timely wise," he accepted the terms ; but, until he told of this meeting, no one had found

out that he was growing old. His powers failed so gradually that not until the shock and exposure, culminating in serious illness, at the time of the burning of his house, did anyone realize that his strength was failing. But the journals show it, for although in the middle period of his life the entries in these were not so many as when his time was freer, after the war they are much fewer. The fact that *Society and Solitude*, and *May Day*, the second book of poems, were in preparation partly accounts for this.

Mr. Emerson had great happiness in that period in giving rein to his poetic instinct, now refined, and in "crooning rhymes" as he walked in the woods, — lines for "May Day," "Waldeinsamkeit," "My Garden," and other fragments. The verse-book filled as the journal shrank.

With the illness of 1872 the journals practically came to an end, nor after that time did Mr. Emerson do any original work except endeavouring to mend or arrange passages in unpublished lectures for the promised volume *Letters and Social Aims;* but he felt his inability for this task, and consented to the calling in by his family of Mr. Cabot's willing and admirable aid.

A few things remain to be said: —

1. In these volumes are selections; not the whole, but the greater part of the contents of the journals.

2. During his most productive years Mr. Emerson used in his books a great part of the thoughts set down in the journals, often with little or no change in form. Such paragraphs are for the most part left out, but sometimes, if important, are referred to. In some instances it seems well to give the original form, which may show the conditions.

3. Most of the personal references, unless too private, are given. Mr. Emerson's notes are free from offence in this particular.

4. The passages in which "Osman" appears are not to be taken as exact autobiography, though they come near being so. "Osman" represents, not Emerson himself, but an ideal man whose problems and experiences are like his own.

5. In some cases where Mr. Emerson quotes passages from memory erroneously, the true version has been given.

6. The reading of the youth, as shown by the quotations, seems to have been so wide, and his love of certain authors so great and

constant, that it seemed well to give lists of the books referred to or authors mentioned in each year up to 1833. Of course many of these quotations were at second hand, yet led the eager scholar to seek out the original work. Plutarch, Shakspeare, Milton, Montaigne, Jonson, Newton, Burke, Scott, Byron, Wordsworth, are quoted so often that we have in the lists, year by year, set down their recurring names to show his love for them. After 1833 only the notable books of the newer reading will be mentioned.

It is interesting to see on the pages of the early journals how the boy's hand instinctively strayed from writing to drawing heads. A few of these are given in the illustrations which seem to show that Emerson had some gift in that direction, had he chosen to follow it.

The cordial thanks of the editors are due to those friends who have helped them in their task by their valuable counsel.

EDWARD W. EMERSON.

September, 1909.

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JOURNAL

COLLEGE

"'In the morning, solitude,' said Pythagoras. By all means give the youth solitude, that Nature may speak to his imagination, as it does never in company; and for the like reason give him a chamber alone;— and that was the best thing I found in college."

Emerson's Journal, 1859.

"I don't think he ever engaged in boys' plays; not because of any physical inability, but simply because, from his earliest years, he dwelt in a higher sphere. My one deep impression is, that, from his earliest childhood, our friend lived and moved and had his being in an atmosphere of letters, quite apart by himself. I can as little remember when he was not literary in his pursuits as when I first made his acquaintance."

From a letter about Emerson by his earliest friend,
Dr. William H. Furness.

This Book may be
retained TWO WEEKS.

JOURNAL I

"No. XVII"

1820

[This "Blotting-Book" rather than Journal, simply marked "No. XVII," showing that it had predecessors, though these are gone, was begun almost with the year 1820. Emerson was then a Junior, living in Hollis Hall, No. 15. A rude but faithful little picture in water-colours of that room, apparently done by him, is found in "The Wide World," No. 1. Its bare floor, uncurtained window, cheap paper, and Spartan furniture, fairly represent the brave simplicity of those days. The pictures are probably such engravings of eminent divines as could be spared from home,—George Whitefield, Dr. Samuel Cooper, Rev. Charles Chauncy, or other lights of that ministry for which the boy was already destined. His chum was John Gaillard Keith Gourdin (pronounced *Godyne*): yet strangely no mention of him occurs in the jottings of that year. Dr. Holmes, in his memoir of Emerson, says: "The two Gourdins, Robert and John Gaillard Keith, were dashing young fellows, as

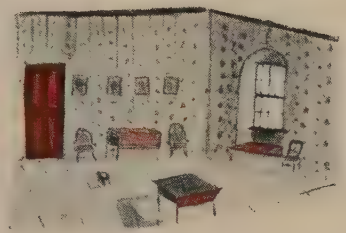
I recollect them, belonging to Charleston, South Carolina. The 'Southerners' were the reigning college *elegans* of that time, the *merveilleux*, the *mirliflores*, of their day. Their swallow-tail coats tapered to an arrow-point angle, and the prints of their little delicate calf-skin boots in the snow were objects of great admiration to the village boys of the period. I cannot help wondering what brought Emerson and the showy, fascinating John Gourdin together as room-mates."

Emerson was writing a dissertation on the Character of Socrates, for which he received a Bowdoin Prize. This, with a later prize-dissertation, "On the Present State of Ethical Culture," were recently printed, with a sketch of Emerson's life, by Dr. Edward Everett Hale, in a small volume published in Boston by the Unitarian Association. For the latter essay Emerson only received the second prize; his classmate, Josiah Quincy, won the first. The book is full of miscellaneous scraps of prose and verse written by the boy, and also quoted from a variety of sources, given below. Many lines from Shakspeare, Byron, Scott, Dryden, and Moore, classified by the initial letter, are stored away there for use in a game, now becoming obsolete, called "Capping verses." The following passages from

lead him astray after Will. o' the Wisp: over wilderness
& fen; fright him ~~with ghastly~~ hobgoblins: wreak
your vengeance as you will — He gives you free
leave on this sole condition, — if you can. —

Junio.

August 24.
1820.



EMERSON'S COLLEGE ROOM (HOLLIS 15) IN HIS JUNIOR YEAR

a study for the paper on Socrates, together with some "Phrases Poetical" which the young author stored to adorn his sentences or enlarge his vocabulary, and a song for a Club festival, are all that seem worth while to print.]

January, 1820. (Age, 16.)

The ostentatious ritual of India which worshipped God by outraging nature, though softened as it proceeded West, was still too harsh a discipline for Athenian manners to undergo.— Socrates had little to do with these and perhaps his information on the subject was very limited. He was not distinguished for knowledge or general information, but for acquaintance with the mind and its false and fond propensities, its springs of action, its assailable parts; in short, his art laid open its deepest recesses, and he handled it and moulded it at will. Indeed we do not have reason to suppose that he was intimately versed in his own national literature, Herodotus, Homer, Thucydides, Pindar, etc.—His profession in early life had perhaps imparted a little of poetic inspiration, but his leading feature seems to have been sagacity—little refinement, little erudition. His genius resembled Æsop.

The greatness of the philosopher shines forth

in its fullest lustre when we examine the originality, the bold and unequalled sublimity of his conceptions. His powerful mind had surmounted the errours of education and had retained useful acquisitions, whilst it discarded what was absurd or unprofitable. He studied Nature with a chastised enthusiasm, and the constant activity of his mind endowed him with an energy of thought little short of inspiration. When he speaks of the immortality of the soul, or when he enters on considerations of the attributes or nature of the deity, he leaves the little quibblings of the sophists, and his own inferiour strains of irony, and his soul warms and expands with his subject; we forget that he is man — he seems seated like Jupiter Creator moulding magnificent forms and clothing them with beauty and grandeur. . . .

What is God? said the disciples, and Plato replied, It is hard to learn and impossible to divulge. . . .

In Athens, learning was not loved for its own sake, but for sinister ends. It was prized as a saleable commodity. The Sophists bargained their literature, such as it was, for a prize which, always exorbitant, was regulated by the ability

of the disciple. And this must always happen more or less in the infancy of letters. In a money-making community literature will soon thrive. It must always follow, not precede, successful trade. The first wants to be supplied are the native ones of animal subsistence and comfort, and when these are more than provided for, and luxury and ease begin to look about them for new gratification, the mind then urges its claim to cultivation. . . .

For use — PHRASES POETICAL

rescuing and crowning virtue. "coldest complexion of age." ill-conditioned. cameleon. zeal. booked in alphabet. cushioned. compunction. beleaguered. halidom. galloping. whortleberry. spikenard. staunch. council-chamber. star-crossed. till its dye was doubled on the crimson cross. countless multitudes. abutments. panoply. sycophant smile. kidnapping. beheaded. demigods. signal (adjective). Cleopatra. ambidexter. register (verb). defalcation.

SONG

You may say what you please of the current rebellion,
Tonight the Conventicle drink to a real one; [1]

1 The Conventicle was a somewhat convivial club, established in their Junior year by some of Emerson's friends, Samuel Alden being Bishop, and John B. Hill, Parson. The "current rebellion," being some outbreak of Sophomores,

The annals of ages have blazoned its fame
And pæans are chanted to hallow its name.
Derry down, etc.

Alas for the windows the Sophs have demolished!
Alas for the Laws that they are not abolished!
And that *Dawes* could abide the warm battle's brunt,
And the Government vote it was Gay, Lee and Blunt.
Derry down.

But this shock of the Universe who could control?
Aghast in despair was each Sophomore's soul,
Save one, who alone in his might could stand forth
To grapple with elements — Mr. Danforth.[1]
Derry down.

could be looked down on smilingly by Juniors who had, the year before, been more or less involved in a "real one" celebrated in that epic, *The Rebelliad*, which has been from time to time reprinted; also described in Josiah Quincy's *Figures of the Past*.

1 Of the above-mentioned victims, Martin Gay and John Clarke Lee, Sophomores, were suspended; and though they finished their college course, did not receive their academic degrees until 1841 and 1842 respectively. Nathanael B. Blunt, also a Sophomore, was dismissed from College. Samuel Danforth remained with the class into the Senior year, but did not receive a degree. Rufus Dawes, a Freshman, seems to have ended his college career in the Sophomore year.

Let the Earth and the Nations to havoc go soon,
And the world tumble upward to mix with the moon;
Old Harvard shall smile at the rare conflagration,
The Coventicle standing her pledge of salvation.
Derry down.

JOURNAL II

THE WIDE WORLD, NO. 1

1820

[The journals from February, 1820, to July, 1824, bear the name "The Wide World," and extracts from all of these are given here, excepting No. 6, which is missing.]

February, 1820.

Mixing with the thousand pursuits and passions and objects of the world as personified by Imagination, is profitable and entertaining. These pages are intended at their commencement to contain a record of new thoughts (when they occur); for a receptacle of all the old ideas that partial but peculiar peepings at antiquity can furnish or furbish; for tablet to save the wear and tear of weak Memory, and, in short, for all the various purposes and utility, real or imaginary, which are usually comprehended under that comprehensive title *Common Place book*. O ye witches, assist me! enliven or horrify some midnight lucubration or dream (whichever may be found most convenient) to supply this

reservoir when other resources fail. Pardon me, Fairy Land! rich region of fancy and gnomery, elvery, sylphery, and Queen Mab! pardon me for presenting my first petition to your enemies, but there is probably one in the chamber who maliciously influenced me to what is irrevocable; pardon and favour me! — And finally, Spirits of Earth, Air, Fire, Water, wherever ye glow, whatsoever you patronize, whoever you inspire, hallow, hallow this devoted paper — Dedicated and Signed January 25, 1820,

JUNIO.

After such a dedication, what so proper to begin with as reflections on or from Edward Search?[1] It is a fine idea which he either intends

1 The *nom de plume* always used by Abraham Tucker (1705–1774), an English scholar, country gentleman and magistrate. His writings were highly praised by Dugald Stewart, Sir James Mackintosh, Hazlitt and others. Leigh Hunt called him "The most agreeable of metaphysicians," and Paley said, "I have found in this writer more original thinking and observation upon the several subjects he has taken in hand than in any other, not to say than all others put together." His principal works are: 1. *A Country Gentleman's Advice to his Son;* 2. *Free will, Foreknowledge and Fate;* 3. *Man in Quest of Himself, or a Defence of the Individuality of the Human Mind or Self;* 4. *The Light of Nature Pursued.*

to convey, or else the form of expression unintentionally did (pray let us believe the latter for the credit of originality) that those parts of the world which man cannot or does not inhabit are the abodes of other orders of sentient being, invisible or unperceived by him. To amplify: Perhaps the inferiour centre of the earth, the bottomless depths and the upper paths of Ocean, the lands circumjacent to the poles, the high rock and clefts of the rock, are peopled by higher beings than ourselves; — animals cast in more refined mould; not subject to the inconveniences, woes, etc., of our species — to whom, as to us, this world appears made only for them, and among whom our very honest and honourable species are classed only as the highest order of brutes — perhaps called of the *bee* kind. When Imagination has formed this class of beings and given them the name of Supromines, it will be perfectly convenient to rise again to an order higher than these last, holding our self-complacent friends, the Supromines, in as utter contempt as they us, or as we the beasts, and then she may rise to another and another, till, for aught I know, she may make this world one of the Mansions of heaven, and in parts of it, though in and around, yet thoroughly

unknown to us, the seraphim and cherubim may live and enjoy. I have now already fallen into an errour, which may be a very common one, to hunt an idea down, when obtained, in such a remorseless manner as to render dull and flat an idea originally plump, round and shining.

Perhaps our system and all the planets, stars, we can discover, nay, the whole interminable Universe, is moving on, as has been supposed, in one grand circle round the centre of light, and since the world began it has never completed a single revolution. It is an improvement on the grandeur of this supposition to suppose there is a source of light before us and the whole vast machinery has been forever and is now sweeping forward in a direct line through the interminable fields — extensions of space. It is a singular fact that we cannot present to the imagination a longer space than just so much of the world as is bounded by the visible horizon; so that, even in this stretching of thought to comprehend the broad path lengthening itself and widening to receive the rolling Universe, stern necessity bounds us to a little extent of a few miles only. But what matters it? we can talk and write and think it out. . . . Chateau-

briand's "the universe is the imagination of the deity made manifest" is worthy him.

. . . . . .

"Mount on thy own path to Fame, nor swerve for man or more than man" says Caswallon (in "Samor"),[1] and it will be a fine motto by striking out the last four words.

INDEPENDENCE; PULPIT ELOQUENCE

Let us suppose a pulpit Orator to whom the path of his profession is yet untried, but whose talents are good and feelings strong, and his independence, as a man, in opinion and action is established; let him ascend the pulpit for the first time, not to please or displease the multitude, but to expound to them the words of the book and to waft their minds and devotions to heaven. Let him come to them in solemnity and strength, and when he speaks he will claim attention with an interesting figure and an interested face. To expand their views of the sublime doctrines of the religion, he may embrace the universe and bring down the stars from their courses to do homage to their Creator.

1 *Samor, Lord of the Bright City*, an Heroic Poem, by the Rev. Henry Hunt Milman, M. A., New York (reprint), C. Wiley & Co., 1818.

Here is a fountain which cannot fail them. Wise Christian orators have often and profitably magnified the inconceivable power of the Creator as manifested in his works, and thus elevated and sobered the mind of the people and gradually drawn them off from the world they have left by the animating ideas of Majesty, Beauty, Wonder, which these considerations bestow. Then when life and its frivolities is fastly flowing away from before them, and the spirit is absorbed in the play of its mightiest energies, and their eyes are on him and their hearts are in heaven, then let him discharge his fearful duty, then let him unfold the stupendous designs of celestial wisdom, and whilst admiration is speechless, let him minister to their unearthly wants, and let the ambassador of the Most High prove himself worthy of his tremendous vocation. Let him gain the tremendous eloquence which stirs men's souls, which turns the world upside down, but which loses all its filth and retains all its grandeur when consecrated to God. When a congregation are assembled together to hear such an apostle, you may look round and you will see the faces of men bent forward in the earnestness of expectation, and in this desirable frame of mind the preacher may lead them

whithersoever he will; they have yielded up their prejudices to the eloquence of the lips which the archangel hath purified and hallowed with fire, and this first sacrifice is the sin-offering which cleanseth them.

WEBSTER

February 7th.

Mr. K., a lawyer of Boston, gave a fine character of a distinguished individual in private conversation, which in part I shall set down. "Webster is a rather large man, about five feet, seven, or nine, in height, and thirty-nine or forty years old — he has a long head, very large black eyes, bushy eyebrows, a commanding expression, — and his hair is coal-black, and coarse as a crow's nest. His voice is sepulchral — there is not the least variety or the least harmony of tone — it commands, it fills, it echoes, but is harsh and discordant. — He possesses an admirable readiness, a fine memory and a faculty of perfect abstraction, an unparallelled impudence and a tremendous power of concentration — he brings all that he has ever heard, read or seen to bear on the case in question. He growls along the bar to see who will run, and if nobody runs he WILL fight. He knows his strength, has a perfect con-

fidence in his own powers, and is distinguished by a spirit of fixed determination; he marks his path out, and will cut off fifty heads rather than turn out of it; but is generous and free from malice, and will never move a step to make a severe remark. His genius is such that, if he descends to be pathetic, he becomes ridiculous. He has no wit and never laughs, though he is very shrewd and sarcastic, and sometimes sets the whole court in a roar by the singularity or pointedness of a remark. His imagination is what the light of a furnace is to its heat, a necessary attendant — nothing sparkling or agreeable, but dreadful and gloomy." —— This is the finest character I have ever heard pourtrayed, and very truly drawn, with little or no exaggeration. With respect to the cause of a town's condition of bad society he said well, "There is stuff to make good society, but they are discordant atoms," and regarding the contrasting and comparing the worthy and great dead, — "you may not tell a man 'your neighbor's house is higher than yours,' but you may measure gravestones and see which is the tallest."

CAMBRIDGE, *March 11th*, 1820.

Thus long I have been in Cambridge this term (three or four weeks) and have not before

this moment paid my devoirs to the Gnomes to whom I dedicated this quaint and heterogeneous manuscript. Is it because matter has been wanting? — no — I have written much elsewhere in prose, poetry, and miscellany — let me put the most favourable construction on the case and say that I have been better employed. Beside considerable attention, however unsuccessful, to college studies, I have finished Bisset's life of Burke, as well as Burke's "Regicide Peace," together with considerable variety of desultory reading, generally speaking, highly entertaining and instructive. The Pythologian poem [1] does not proceed very rapidly, though I have experienced some poetic moments. Could I seat myself in the alcove of one of those public libraries which human pride and literary rivalship have made costly, splendid and magnificent, it would indeed be an enviable situation. I would plunge into the classic lore of chivalrous story and of the fairy-land bards, and unclosing the ponderous volumes of the firmest believers in magic and in the potency of consecrated crosier or elfin ring, I would let my soul sail away delighted into their wildest phantasies. Pendragon is rising

1 A poem written for another Club, which will be later mentioned.

before my fancy, and has given me permission to wander in his walks of Fairy-land and to present myself at the bower of Gloriana. I stand in the fair assembly of the chosen, the brave and the beautiful; honour and virtue, courage and delicacy are mingling in magnificent joy. Unstained knighthood is sheathing the successful blade in the presence of unstained chastity. And the festal jubilee of Fairy-land is announced by the tinkling of its silver bells. The halls are full of gorgeous splendour and the groves are joyous with light and beauty. The birds partake and magnify the happiness of the green-wood shades and the music of the harp comes swelling on the gay breezes. Or other views more real, scarcely less beautiful, should attract, enchain me. All the stores of Grecian and Roman literature may be unlocked and fully displayed — or, with the Indian enchanters, send my soul up to wander among the stars till "the twilight of the gods."

April 2d.

Spring has returned and has begun to unfold her beautiful array, to throw herself on wild-flower couches, to walk abroad on the hills and summon her songsters to do her sweet homage. The Muses have issued from the library and

costly winter dwelling of their votaries, and are gone up to build their bowers on Parnassus, and to melt their ice-bound fountains. Castalia is flowing rapturously and lifting her foam on high. The hunter and the shepherd are abroad on the rock and the vallies echo to the merry, merry horn. The Poet, of course, is wandering, while Nature's thousand melodies are warbling to him. This soft bewitching luxury of vernal gales and accompanying beauty overwhelms. It produces a lassitude which is full of mental enjoyment and which we would not exchange for more vigorous pleasure. Although so long as the spell endures, little or nothing is accomplished, nevertheless, I believe it operates to divest the mind of old and worn-out contemplations and bestows new freshness upon life, and leaves behind it imaginations of enchantment for the mind to mould into splendid forms and gorgeous fancies which shall long continue to fascinate, after the physical phenomena which woke them have ceased to create delight.

April 4th.

Judging from opportunity enjoyed, I ought to have this evening a flow of thought, rich, abundant and deep; after having heard Mr.

Everett deliver his Introductory Lecture, in length one and one half hour, having read much and profitably in the Quarterly Review, and lastly having heard Dr. Warren's introductory lecture to anatomy, — all in the compass of a day [1] — and the mind possessing a temperament well adapted to receive with calm attention what was offered. Shall endeavor to record promiscuously received ideas: — Though the literature of Greece gives us sufficient information with regard to later periods of their commonwealth, as we go back, before the light of tradition comes in, the veil drops. "All tends to the mysterious

1 Edward Everett was appointed in 1815, first to fill the chair of Greek Literature just founded anonymously by Samuel Eliot. He went to Europe to fit himself for it. Many years later, Mr. Emerson wrote, "Germany had created criticism in vain for us until 1820, when Edward Everett returned from his five years in Europe and brought to Cambridge his rich results, which no one was so fitted by natural grace and the splendor of his rhetoric to introduce and recommend." (See long passage in his praise in "Historic Notes of Life and Letters in New England" in *Lectures and Biographical Sketches*, vol. x, Emerson's Works.)

Dr. John Collins Warren, second in a line of eminent surgeons which still holds high place in Boston, and founder of the Warren Museum, after six years' service as adjunct professor, had succeeded his father as Hersey Professor of Anatomy and Surgery.

East." . . . From the time of the first dispersion of the human family to the time of Grecian rise, everything in the history of man is obscure, and we think ourselves sufficiently fortunate "if we can write in broad lines the fate of a dynasty," though we know nothing of the individuals who composed it. The cause is the inefficiency and uncertainty of tradition in those early and ignorant times when the whole history of a tribe was lodged in the head of its patriarch, and in his death their history was lost. But even after the invention of letters, much, very much, has never reached us. This we need not regret. What was worth knowing was transmitted to posterity, the rest buried in deserved forgetfulness. Everything was handed down which ought to be handed down. The Phenicians gave the Greeks their *Alphabet*, yet not a line of all which they wrote has come down, while their pupils have built themselves an imperishable monument of fame.

. . . . . .

I here make a resolution to make myself acquainted with the Greek language and antiquities and history with long and serious attention and study; (always with the assistance of circumstances.) To which end I hereby dedicate

and devote to the down-putting of sentences quoted or original, which regard Greece, historical, poetical and critical, page 47 of this time-honored register. By the way, I devote page 45 to the notation of Inquirenda and of books to be sought.

Signed, JUNIO.

April 30th.

. . . Ethereal beings to whom I dedicated the pages of my "Wide World," do not, I entreat you, neglect it; when I sleep waken me; when I weary animate! Wander after moonbeams, fairies! but bring them home here. Indeed, you cannot imagine how it would gratify me to wake up from an accursed Enfield lesson and find a page written in characters of light by a moonbeam of Queen Mab! I will give you a subject —a thousand if you wish; — for instance "Pendragon," your own Pendragon; record his life and his glories. "Prince Arthur" if it is not too trite; or "the Universe," or a broom-stick; either or all of these, or fifty thousand more.

June 7th.

A very singular chance led me to derive very sensible answers to the two questions I pro-

posed to Virgil.[1] For the first I opened to the line —

O crudelis Alexi, nihil mea carmina curas.[2]

For the other I opened to a line, Dryden's translation of which is —

"Go, let the gods and temples claim thy care."

Have been of late reading patches of Barrow and Ben Jonson; and what the object — not curiosity? no — nor expectation of edification intellectual or moral — but merely because they are authors where vigorous phrases and quaint, peculiar words and expressions may be sought and found, the better "to rattle out the battle of my thoughts." I shall now set myself to give a good sentence of Barrow's (the whole beauty of which he has impaired by a blundering collocation) in purer and more fashionable English; — Obvious manifestations may be sometimes seen

1 This passage refers to his consulting the *Virgilianæ Sortes*, that is, opening Virgil at random and taking the first line the eye lighted on for an oracle. On the first occasion, he was a competitor for a college prize for verse. When the prizes were announced, he had won the second. It is probable that the other question he propounded was with regard to his vocation in life.

2 Virgil, *Eclogue* II.

of the ruling government of God. Sometimes in the career of triumphant guilt when things have come to such a pass that iniquity and outrage do exceedingly prevail, so that the life of the offender becomes intolerably grievous, a change comes upon the state of things, however stable and enduring in appearance, a revolution in a manner sudden and strange, and flowing from causes mean and unworthy, which overturneth the towering fabric of fortune and reduces its gigantic dimensions; and no strugglings of might, no fetches of policy, no circumspection or industry of man availing to uphold it: there is outstretched an invisible hand checking all such force and crossing all such devices—a stone cut out of the mountain without hands and breaking to pieces the iron and the brass and the clay and [the] silver and the gold.—In looking over the sentence however, though the grand outline of the whole was originally the Rev. Isaac Barrow's, yet we very self-complacently confess that great alterations have rendered it editorially Mr. Ralph Emerson's, and I intend to make use of it hereafter, after another new modelling, for it is still very susceptible of improvement.

June 19th.

When those magnificent masses of vapour which load our horizon are breaking away, disclosing fields of blue atmosphere, there is an exhilaration awakened in the system of a susceptible man which so invigorates the energies of mind, and displays to himself such manifold power and joy superiour to other existences, that he will triumph and exult that he is a man. . . . We feel at these times that eternal analogy which subsists between the external changes of nature, and scenes of good and ill that chequer human life. Joy cometh, but is speedily supplanted by grief, and we look at the approach of transient verities like the mists of the morning, fearful and many, but the fairies are in them and *White Ladies* beckoning.

August 8th.

I have been reading the *Novum Organum.* Lord Bacon is indeed a wonderful writer; he condenses an unrivaled degree of matter in one paragraph. He never suffers himself "to swerve from the direct forthright," or to babble or speak unguardedly on his proper topic, and withal writes with more melody and rich cadence than any writer (I had almost said, of England) on a

similar subject. Although I have quoted in my "Universe" of composition (by which presumptuous term I beg leave to remind myself that nothing was meant but to express wideness and variety of range), yet I will add here a fine little sentence from the thirtieth section of the second volume of the *Novum Organum*. Speaking of bodies composed of two different species of things, he says: "but these instances may be reckoned of the singular or heteroclite kind, as being rare and extraordinary in the universe; yet for their dignity they ought to be separately placed and treated. For they excellently indicate the composition and structure of things; and suggest the cause of the number of the ordinary species of the universe; and lead the understanding from that which is, to that which may be." There is nothing in this sentence which should cause it to be quoted more than another. It does not stand out from the rest; but it struck me accidentally as a very different sentence from those similarly constructed in ordinary writers. For instance, in the last three clauses (beginning "For they excellently") it is common to see an author construct a fine sentence in this way, with idle repetitions of the same idea, embellished a little for the sake of

shrouding the deception. In this, they all convey ideas determinate, but widely different and all beautiful and intelligent. — But, says Sterne, "the cant of criticism is the most provoking."

There is a strange face in the Freshman class whom I should like to know very much. He has a great deal of character in his features and should be a fast friend or bitter enemy. His name is —— I shall endeavour to become acquainted with him and wish, if possible, that I might be able to recall at a future period the singular sensations which his presence produced at this.[1]

1 The name is given, and later scratched out. The person referred to was Martin Gay of Hingham, who, born in the same year with Emerson, came to college two years later. The entries in prose and verse concerning this boy, which follow in Emerson's journals for the Junior and Senior years, show how strong the fascination was, for there is a remarkable absence of mention of other students. It would seem that this was an imaginary friendship. There is no evidence that the elder student ever brought himself to risk disenchantment by active advances, and the younger boy could not understand why he was watched and even followed afar by this strange upper-class man. It would have been not unnatural that he should have resented it, being of an entirely different temperament, and called "Cool Gay" by his classmates. His active interests are said to have been scientific experiments and the

When we see an exquisite specimen of painting—whence does the pleasure we experience arise? From the *resemblance*, it is immediately answered, to the works of nature. It is granted that this is in part the cause, but it can't explain the whole pleasure we enjoy; for we see more perfect resemblances (as a stone apple or fruit) without this pleasure. No, it arises from the *power* which we immediately recollect to be necessary to the creation of the painting.

College Military Company. Gay studied medicine and took his doctor's degree in 1826. He practised a short time in New Bedford, then for the rest of his life in Boston. He was modest and faithful, with a high sense of honour. His practice grew slowly but steadily, and he was much beloved. His interests were scientific, chemistry especially. He was a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and curator of the department of Mineralogy in the Boston Natural History Society. As an analytical chemist he acquired a high reputation, and it is said that his testimony in the courts in cases of death by poisoning "marked an era in the history of medical jurisprudence in this country." Yet although Dr. Gay lived within twenty miles of Emerson, and was a valued friend of his wife's brother, Dr. Charles T. Jackson, whose claim to the discovery of anæsthesia by ether in surgical operations he loyally defended, it does not appear that Emerson ever really knew him; yet he always was interested to hear of him, and was grieved at his untimely death in 1850.

August 21*st.*

In the H[arvard] C[ollege] Athenæum I enjoyed a very pleasant hour reading the life of Marlborough in the "Quarterly Review." I was a little troubled there by vexatious trains of thought; but once found myself stopping entirely from my reading and occupied in throwing guesses into futurity while I was asking myself if, when, ten or a dozen years hence, I am gone far on the bitter, perplexing roads of life, when I shall then recollect these moments, now thought so miserable, shall I not fervently wish the possibility of their return, and to find myself again thrown awkwardly on the tilted chair in the Athenæum study with my book in my hand; the snuffers and lamps and shelves around; and Motte[1] coughing over his newspaper near me, and ready myself to saunter out into gaiety and Commons when that variously-meaning *bell* shall lift up his *tongue*.

"Sed fugit interea, fugit irreparabile tempus."

August 23, 1820.

To-morrow finishes the Junior year. As it is

1 Emerson's classmate, Mellish Irving Motte, from Charleston, S. C. He was minister of the South Congregational Church in Boston from 1828 to 1842.

time to close our accounts, we will conclude likewise this book which has been formed from the meditations and fancies which have sprinkled the miscellany-corner of my mind for two terms past. It was begun in the winter vacation. I think it has been an improving employment decidedly. It has not encroached upon other occupations and has afforded seasonable aid at various times to enlarge or enliven scanty themes, etc. Nor has it monopolized the energies of composition for literary exercises. Whilst I have written in it, I have begun and completed my Pythologian Poem of 260 lines,[1] — and my Dissertation on the Character of Socrates. It has prevented the *ennui* of many an idle moment and has perhaps enriched my stock of language for future exertions. Much of it has been written with a view to their preservation, as hints for a peculiar pursuit at the distance of years. Little or none of it was elaborate — its office was to be a hasty, sketchy composition, containing at times elements of graver order.

1 Emerson was secretary of a small literary (and, when fines permitted, mildly convivial,) club of this name, and on this occasion had written in "heroics" a didactic poem on *Improvement*. The record-book of the Club was found among his papers, and will be given to the College library. Some extracts from this book will be given later in this volume.

So fare ye well, gay Powers and Princedoms! To you the sheets were inscribed. Light thanks for your tutelary smiles. Grim witches from Valhalla, and courteous dames from Faery-land, whose protection was implored and whose dreams were invoked to furnish forth the scroll, adieu to you all;—you have the laughing poet's benison and malison, his wish and his forgetfulness. Abandoning your allegiance, he throws you to the winds, recklessly defying your malice and fun. Pinch the red nose; lead him astray after Will-o'-the-wisp over wilderness and fen; fright him with ghastly hobgoblins—wreak your vengeance as you will—He gives you free leave on this sole condition,—if you can.

Junio.

August 24, 1820.

Books to be Sought

Wordsworth's *Recluse; Quarterly Review*, September, 1819; Liber VIII, of Buchanan's *Scotland*—Wallace; Spenser's *View of the State of Ireland;* Camden's *Annals of Queen Elizabeth;* Kennet's *Life and Characters of Greek Poets;* Hody, *De Illustribus Graecis;* Middleton's Cicero; Burton's *Melancholy;* Barrow's Sermons; Hobbes' *Leviathan*; Joinville's *Life*

of St. Louis; Froissart's *History of England;* Chaucer's Works; Bayle's *Dictionaire; Corinne;* Massinger's Plays; Fletcher's do; Bentley's *Phalaris;* Peter's Letters; *Letters from Eastern States; Waverley;* Cogan *On the Passions; Sir Charles Grandison.*

Inquirenda

Extent, history of the *Troubadours.* — *Pendragon.* — Sir Walter Raleigh's conceipt of the "Faery Queen." — Valhalla. — Archipelago. — Paestum. — Taillefer at the battle of Hastings. — Illumination (graphic). — *Griselda* of Boccace. — Walter Raleigh's account of Theories of Paradise. — Water-spouts.[1]

Extracts from the Record of the (Pythologian?) Society,

of which Emerson was for a time Secretary.

1819–1821

[Although in the Secretary's book no name is given to the Society, and in the record of the

1 A book-club was organized by Emerson and some of his college friends. They subscribed for some of the English reviews and for the *North American,* then new. They also bought new poems and fiction, especially Scott's novels; and often read them aloud at their meetings. Of course, most of the serious reading mentioned in the journals, while in Cambridge, was done in the College library.

meeting of June 13, 1819, the committee appointed to consider the subject reported that "it is best that the society should have no name," and that report was accepted, it there appears that Emerson was appointed to prepare a poem for the celebration of the first anniversary of the Society, and read one, as the accompanying extracts show. In the journal covering this period, however, he twice mentions the writing of his "Pythologian Poem."]

Several members of the Sophomore class met at Gourdin's room,[1] April 24th, 1819, for the purpose of forming a society, for exercise in composition and discussion: Present, Blood, Emerson, Frye, Gourdin 2d, Hill 2d,[2] James, Reed, and Wood. The question, whether it be expedient to form a society for this purpose, was proposed and debated. Voted unanimously, to form a society, for these purposes; Hill 2d, Wood and Emerson, were chosen to prepare regulations and laws, to be presented at the next meeting. They adjourned to meet at Frye's room on the second of May, at half-past 7, P. M.

1 Also Emerson's room.

2 There were two Gourdins and two Hills, brothers, in the class.

LAWS AND REGULATIONS OF THE ——

The great design of public education is to qualify men for usefulness in active life, and the principal arts by which we can be useful are those of writing and speaking.

We are told by those from whose decision there is no appeal that by constant, unwearied practice only can facility and excellence in these arts be attained. We believe that societies, when well regulated, and supported with spirit, are of great use towards acquiring these important qualifications. We therefore agree to form ourselves into a society for writing and extemporaneous speaking, to be called

We engage to endeavour to promote the interests of the society and the mutual improvement of each other by freely receiving and imparting instructions, and we pledge our honour to be governed by the following laws and regulations:[1]—

Article 1. The society shall consist of no more than twelve members, and no person shall be

1 The more important of these, submitted by the committee at the meeting of May 2, and adopted and signed by the members, are here given.

admitted without the consent of every member.

Article 4. Six members shall read compositions at every regular meeting, upon subjects given out by the society, as they are called upon by the Moderator, and six shall discuss subjects proposed at the preceding meeting, each upon the subject assigned him by the society.

Article 5. Two members shall be chosen from those who read compositions to decide the question, and, in case of disagreement, the Moderator shall decide it.

Article 6. Four members shall be chosen by the society to read essays before the society upon subjects of their own choice, two at the meeting nearest the middle of each term to perform at the meeting nearest the middle of the next term, and two at the end of each term to perform at the last meeting of the succeeding term. Any member neglecting or refusing to read a composition or discuss, shall be fined twelve and one-half cents; for neglecting to read an essay, fifty cents. Disorderly or disrespectful conduct shall subject the offender to a fine of six and one-quarter cents; non-attendance shall be fined twelve and one-half cents. Any member coming

after the meeting shall be fined six and one-quarter cents.[1]

*John Angier[2]	*Geo. B. James
Oliver Blood	*Benj. T. Reed
Warren Burton	*Charles W. Upham
Ralph W. Emerson	Nathl. Wood
Enoch Frye	Edward Kent
John G. K. Gourdin	Saml. H. Lyon
Joseph B. Hill	John M. Cheney
Jn. B. Hill	

1 Spanish silver coins representing these amounts were in general circulation up to the year 1850; the six and one-quarter cents was however called "fourpence-hapenny," and the twelve and one-half cents "ninepence" in New England, and in the Western and Southern States a "bit," surviving still in "two bits" for twenty-five cents.

2 Those whose names are marked with an asterisk were "honourably dismissed" at their own request.

A few words may be said of some of these members. Warren Burton, of Wilton, N. H., became a clergyman, first a Unitarian, afterwards an enthusiastic Swedenborgian. He preached in various Massachusetts and New Hampshire towns, and was minister-at-large among the poor in Boston. But he chiefly devoted himself to writing and lecturing upon domestic education and home-culture.

John Gourdin returned to his home in the South and died early.

John Boynton and Joseph Bancroft Hill, twin brothers, came from Mason, N. H. The former became a lawyer; the

October 25th, 1819.

. . . . . .

The next meeting being that of the essays, a committee of three were chosen to provide for the evening: Blood, Gourdin and Lyon. It was found necessary by the society to have a particular sum of money agreed on to be expended essay evenings.[1]

Accordingly, it was voted that two dollars should be the sum; that what the fines did

latter also studied law, but was successively a printer, teacher and Presbyterian preaching elder, mainly in Tennessee. During the Civil War he was a field agent of the U. S. Christian Commission and died in that service at Chattanooga.

Charles W. Upham studied divinity and was a minister in Salem. Later, he was mayor of that city and was sent to Congress. His book on the Salem witchcraft is well known.

Edward Kent, a handsome, forcible, and dignified man, was born in Concord, N. H. He studied law and moved to Bangor, Maine, of which city he was mayor. He was twice Governor of Maine, later, Consul at Rio Janeiro, and finally a justice of the Supreme Court of Maine.

John M. Cheney lived in Concord, like Emerson, and was for most of his life cashier of the bank there.

1 On essay evenings (if the essays were forthcoming, and not without) there was some simple refreshment. Mr. Emerson used to say that he remembered the Malaga from Warland's (the grocer) as more delicious than any wine he had tasted since.

not cancel should be paid by an assessment upon the members. Voted to adjourn till Monday evening, 6 o'clock, to Br. Gourdin's room, November 7th.

NATHANIEL WOOD, Sec'y.

Monday Ev'g., *March 6th*, [1820].

Met at Br. Wood's room according to adjournment. Proceeded to confer on the admission of a new member, *vice* Upham. Cheney was nominated and elected, and Br. Wood appointed to inform him and invite him to join. Proceeded to the reading of themes. Brs. Lyon and Gourdin being absent, chose by lot as voluntary discussers Blood, *vice* Gourdin, and Wood, *vice* Lyon. The first discussion between Kent and Frye was decided in favour of Kent by Blood and Reed, judges. After discussion, chose Brs. Kent and Hill 1st to appoint subjects for discussion; Brs. Wood and Burton for themes. The committee for discussions report:—

1st: Which is most conducive to individual happiness, a state of celibacy or matrimony? — Burton and Reed.

2d: Whether Daddy Tracy can be justified in spending his days in Cambridge? — Wood and Blood.

3d: Which is the strongest passion, Love or Ambition?—Emerson.

Committee for themes report, "Envy wishes, and then believes." Both reports accepted.

Br. Reed requested that the fine which he had paid for non-performance of Essay might be refunded, as he had been sick for three weeks previous to the evening on which it was due, and was then sick and out of town. Much warm debate ensuing, he withdrew the request and it was *Voted*, That the members of the society as individuals in the situation of Br. Reed would consider an essay as due from them.

Adjourned till Monday evening, a fortnight hence, to meet at 7 o'clock at Br. Emerson's room.

Attest, R. W. Emerson.

Monday Evg., *March 20th* [1820].

Met according to adjournment, Br. Kent in the chair. Proceeded to reading themes, then to discussion. On account of the absence of Brs. Hill 1st, Gourdin and Lyon, it was *Voted* that Brs. Frye and Hill 2d be judges of all the discussions. Question arising with regard to the expediency of choosing by lot one who should voluntarily discuss with Br. Emerson, it was

Voted, That in the present or a similar instance the single discussor should speak alone. The judges decided the first discussion in favour of Br. Reed (for celibacy!). On examination of the second, the judges reported indecision, and the Moderator decided for Br. Wood. After discussion, proceeded to hear Br. Wood's report as committee, who reported that Mr. Cheney will join the society with pleasure, but cannot appear till the next meeting. Proceeded to committees. Brs. Blood and Burton, committee for discussions, report: —

1st: Whether the accession of the Canadas to the territory of the U. S. A. would be for the best interest of this country. — Frye and Hill 1st.

2d: Whether Commons be honourable to the progress of College literature. — Kent and Hill 2d.

3d: Whether Cicero or Demosthenes be the greatest orator. — Gourdin and Lyon.

Committee of themes report "Futurity."

Voted, That the anniversary of this society, the 24th of April next, be celebrated by Oration and Poem. Chose Br. Kent Orator, and Br. Emerson Poet. As the next meeting is Essay night, chose Br. Burton and Emerson committee of arrangements.

Adjourned to Monday Evg., 7 o'clock, to meet at Br. Burton's room.

Attest, R. W. Emerson, Sec'y.

Monday Evg., *April 3d* [1820].

Met according to adjournment. Br. Lyon in the chair. Proceeded to hear Br. Hill 1st's Essay *Voted*, that the thanks of the society be presented to Br. Hill for his elegant and ingenious performance. Br. Gourdin not being present, proceeded to the convivial business of the evening. Afterwards Br. Gourdin appearing, on account of the lateness of the time, and other considerations, it was *Voted*, That Br. G.'s Essay should be read at the next ordinary meeting of the society.

Appointed Brs. Hill 2d and Wood to be the Essayists at the meeting in the middle of next term.

Adjourned till April 24th, the anniversary of the Society, to meet at Br. Emerson's Room, to hear the Oration and Poem.

Attest, R. W. Emerson, Sec'y.

April 26th, 1820.

Met by mistake two days later than the anniversary. *Voted*, that Br. Gourdin be requested

to read his Essay this evening to the society. Proceeded to initiate Br. Cheney, then to hear the Essay. *Voted*, that the thanks of the society be presented to Br. Gourdin, for his correct and elegant essay. Br. Blood presented Br. Kent's excuse for non-attendance, and it was *Voted*, that Br. Emerson be a committee to request Br. Kent to deliver his oration to the society at the earliest convenient opportunity. Proceeded to hear the poem. A treat was then given to the society by the liberality of Brs. Reed and Lyon.

Voted that the thanks of the society be given to Brs. Reed and Lyon for their *unexampled munificence*. Adjourned to a fortnight from next Monday evening.

Sec. R. W. Emerson.

. . . . . .

November 18, 1820.

After several unsuccessful efforts, on the part of the Secretary, to call the society together, a few of the members (affording an instance of disinterestedness and self denial, which reflects the highest honour on themselves) met this evening at Br. Hill's room. After spending some time in lively conversation, a sufficient number were found present to form a quorum;

and, accordingly, the meeting was opened, when, agreeably to the object of the meeting, the Essays were called for.

But Br. Gourdin, from whom one has been some time due, not appearing, his of course was omitted; as was Br. Blood's for the same reason. The Essayists, whose performances became due this evening, were Brs. Cheney and Emerson. Br. Cheney was, therefore, called upon, and delivered a very *elegant and patriotic Essay;* for which the sincere thanks of the society were bestowed upon him; a mark of honour incomparably more valuable than medals, which time will tarnish and destroy, or statues, which violence will deface, and barbarism overthrow. —

Here the Secretary would gladly close the record of this evening, and let the critics of Posterity suppose that what he has written above is merely a fragment of what he recorded; and exercise their learning and ingenuity in supplying the deficiency, but truth and fidelity forbid. For (O tempora! O mores!) no sooner had Br. Cheney delivered his Essay, and received the thanks of the Society, as above recorded, than some of the members present began to express uneasiness at being any longer detained; and that, although Br. Emerson was prepared to read the

Essay due from him. Strange infatuation! But such was their desire to depart that it was found impossible to keep them together any longer. The meeting was therefore adjourned.—

Attest, E. FRYE, Secretary.

February 26th, 1821.

Wonderful to relate! within an hour of the time appointed, a larger number of the members than have attended any meeting since I have had the honour to be Sec'y, met at No. 4 H'y[1] to hear the *Essays* due last time, and the *anniversary oration* due from time not quite immemorial, but so long that it should have been delivered almost a year ago.—The meeting was then opened (with Br. Kent in the chair) and the oration called for. But Br. Kent, not having had sufficient time, we may suppose, to prepare himself since he was chosen Orator, desired that it might be postponed till the next anniversary (April 24th); which was agreed to by the society. We shall then verify the old proverb, by killing two birds with one stone. Having settled this business, Br. Burton was called on for his Essay, which has been due almost as long as the Oration. But not being prepared, it was *Voted*, after hearing

1 Holworthy Hall.

his excuse, "*that it be delivered on the evening of the Monday nearest the fifteenth of April.*" — Br. Gourdin being absent, his Essay of course was not read. Br. Blood, whose Essay was due at the same time with Br. Gourdin's, was next called on. — But it appearing that, by some fatal mistake, he had left it in Sterling, or elsewhere, a vote was passed to hear it with Br. Burton's. Thus we despatch business. No Essay now remained to be heard except Br. Emerson's; which was not read last term on account of circumstances mentioned page 46 of this volume. He was, therefore, called on to read now. And, oh! how the Secretary's heart beat with joy, when he actually saw him arise from his seat, and, taking a roll of paper from his pocket, seat himself by the table! Rejoice with me, my Brethren, for we shall yet hear an Essay this evening. — He accordingly read a very "*Elegant and appropriate Essay*," for which he received the unanimous and (let me add) the most sincere thanks of the society.

All business relative to performances being thus finished, Br. Hill 2d was chosen committee of one to wait on Br. Gourdin, and inform him that, unless he, in future, attend the meetings of *the* society more regularly than in times

past, he *shall* be *expelled.* Br. Blood was likewise chosen committee of one to wait on Br. Lyon for the same purpose. . . .

And now, as my term of service has expired, I must leave it with him [Hill, the new Secretary] to transmit to posterity the very interesting proceedings of this society, while I with true firmness of mind (Oh! the sweets of power!), will descend to a private station. So farewell to all my greatness; Frye's occupation 's gone!

Attest, ENOCH FRYE, Sec'y.

Wednesday, *March* 21, 1821.

Met at Br. Blood's, and let us look up, for the day of restoration draweth nigh. With rapture do I record the proceedings of this joyful evening.

Imprimis: Br. Wood filled the chair with superior dignity, in which gravity and imposing majesty were predominant. The house was then called to order, and we were favoured with a most ingenious, amusing, and humorous performance by Br. Blood, entitled, "journal travels, etc" in the country. The effect which this produced upon us was — I cannot tell how powerful — and therefore shall not attempt to describe

it, — it baffled description. Therefore we will drop that subject and turn to a milder atmosphere, and calmer sky. — Br. Emerson next advanced, with a neat, concise and *pithy* comparison of country and city life, much to the edification of the Brotherhood. Br. Wood then obliged us with an original and, no doubt, very accurate description of "country life," in which he drew aside the curtain, that is, opened the door and introduced us, at once, into the interior of a Yeoman's dwelling. We were very much pleased with the mistake which the master of the house, "good easy soul" made, by taking his guest at first for an Ass, or some other outlandish beast. But on awaking from his nap, he saw his error, and gave him such a cordial reception, that we were charmed with "country life." Themes being despatched, proceeded to discussion. The first, Hill 2d *solus*, Gourdin absent, decided in his favour of course. Then the important Dowling question was discussed by Kent and Frye.[1] In the progress of which the former displayed an interest, an eloquence, warmth of feeling, and sensibility in defence of Patrick

1 At a meeting in the preceding August, the question had been assigned to these members, "Whether Dowling be advantageous to the welfare of college?"

Dowling, a Catholic Irishman, which did equal honour to his head and his heart. He even rose to the Sublime in defence of this great and much injured man, interlarded with specimens of the most beautiful Pathos. His feelings indeed were so much affected, that they choked his utterance, but his expressive countenance did more for his cause than all the letters in the alphabet. Brother Frye on the contrary produced many "knock-down" arguments, which had a manifest tendency to disprove all his opponent had advanced. He assailed him with invectives and contradictions in abundance. Displayed much sophistry, satire, humour, in his attack upon the maculate Dowling. He would even gladly have buried him in a hole of his own digging, into which a fit of intoxication had plunged him. This being a case of peculiar importance, instead of committing the decision, as usual, to two members only, the secretary formally took the opinion of all present; and notwithstanding the obstinate virulence, and the position of Mr. Attorney Frye, the Patrick was cleared by a majority of one. So may intemperance triumph![1]

. . . . . .

Committees: Kent and Hill 2d, For Dis-

1 This last sentence seems to have been written in later.

cussions, reported the following which were accepted.

1: Whether it be beneficial to the students to spend much time in the acquisition of the polite accomplishment. — Burton and Emerson.

2: A Conference. On the comparative interest excited by the lectures of Ware, Willard and Everett. — Blood, Cheney and Wood.

Blood and Cheney, for themes, reported: "The miseries of human life." Accepted.

Voted to adjourn to the 5 April next, to meet at Burton's, at 7 o'clock P. M.

April 5, 1821.

Met at Burton's. . . .

Kent and Hill 2d, judges of the discussion by Burton and Emerson, decided in the negative, in favour of Burton.

Attest, Jos. B. Hill, Sec.

May 1*st*, 1821.

Met at Brother Blood's to hear Br. Kent's anniversary oration. Liberal provision had been made for social conviviality, to which two bottles of wine, handed over by brother Emerson, not a little contributed, and for which by a public

vote the society bestowed their warmest thanks to brother Emerson. Br. Cheney filled the chair, and after a cheerful glass the orator held forth on —

[Here the records of the society come to an abrupt end, excepting certain accounts in the end of the books, and the following official declaration: —]

I, R. W. Emerson, committee of arrangements, have received of R. W. Emerson, Secretary, the sum of two dollars for each essay-meeting in the past term collected from fine and assessment, and likewise the donations made to the society on the anniversary meeting, &c., and have faithfully expended the same for the *best interests* of the society, as far as my limited apprehension would assist me. There remains in the Treasury the sum of *one cent*, being the donation of Br. Oliver Blood to the Society — which I shall pay on the demand of the new Secretary.

Signed, R. W. Emerson.

JOURNAL III

"NO. XVIII"

1820

[Between, or contemporary with "Wide Worlds," Nos. 1 and 2, is a manuscript book, marked as above, a few specimens from which are here given. Besides these, it contains notes on College lectures, and extracts copied from the books he was reading; also some very juvenile criticism of Wordsworth, especially the "Excursion," and notes for his prize dissertation "On the Present State of Ethical Philosophy," which, as has been said, Rev. Dr. Edward Everett Hale printed, with that on Socrates, accompanying his sketch of Emerson.

The note-book also has fragments on the Religion of the Middle Ages, Religious Tendencies of Different States of Society, on Poetry, et cætera. Of romance also there are a few pages, "The Magician," and an unnamed one about a witch-wife; also various scraps of verse, including part of a ballad on King Richard.

But much space is given in this and some of the following "Wide Worlds" to a discussion

of the Drama, especially in America. He attacks it in a daring and violent manner, praising the Greek tragedies, but his youthful sense of morality is outraged by the grossness of passages in the Elizabethan dramatists, and his taste disgusted by the degeneracy of the later drama. It must be borne in mind, however, first, that it is doubtful whether the youth had ever been inside of a play-house; second, that the writings in question were probably prepared for a debate in the Pythologian Society, in which he had his part assigned; hence, do not exactly represent Emerson's views at the time, especially as, somewhat later, he adopts a much less stringent tone, and believes that the Theatre in America might be reformed, and become an elevating influence, from which, however, Shakespeare with all his charms, must be excluded, unless severely expurgated.]

"NO. XVIII"

BOSTON, *September 22d*, 1820.

Where dost thou careless lie
  Buried in ease and sloth?
Knowledge that sleeps doth die;
And this security,

It is the common moth
Which eats on wits and arts, and quite destroys them both.

Are all the Aonian springs
Dryed up? Lies Thespia waste?
Does Clarius' harp want strings?
That not a nymph now sings,
Or droop they as disgraced
To see their seats and bowers by chattering pies defaced?

Ben Jonson to Himself.

DRAMA

Campbell, the poet, said to Professor Everett that the only chance which America has for a truly national literature is to be found in the Drama;[1] we are bound to reverence such high authority, and at least to examine the correctness of the position.

Few speculations have such a charm in their nature as this, whose object is, how to conduct a dialogue between a man and his fellow just far enough removed from common life to avoid

1 This statement is twice made in this journal. I have substituted for the one found in this place the later one, as better expressed, and mentioning that the opinion was given to Professor Everett.

disgust while it must claim the attention and elevate the tone of feeling.

In the nation which has always been regarded as the model in all the arts, the fountain of all polished letters, and the pattern of all time, the Drama was invented, and there alone succeeded perfectly. All inquiries therefore upon this subject begin from Greece. The history and influence of tragedy, its modes and machines of operation, must be explained from these sources.

Tragedy, by exciting the emotions of fear and of pity, tends to correct the same affections in the soul. This has been all along esteemed the philosophy of tragedy, with what correctness we shall not pretend to determine; but these ends were answered in Greece, and more than this, a respect for the gods was effectually inculcated. The thraldom of superstition was made useful to shackle those whom the light and law of natural religion could not guide, and he whom the beauty of moral rectitude could not win, was afraid to face the temple of the Furies, and averted his head as he passed by it. But by whom was this powerful influence created over a people whose refined taste kept a watchful eye on the artist, so that it should not be seduced unawares, and never yielded save to

the irresistible might of genius? In what schools did they purchase the subtle art which became in their hands an instrument of such power? This question is the most important which can be asked, for it developes the causes of their pre-eminence. It was not the robed disciple at ease in the Academy who gained the prize of tragedy, but Æschylus was a son of the republic who had fought valiantly at Marathon and Plataea, and came bleeding from the battle, to assemble in a simple natural plot the personages of old traditions, and attribute to them the feelings he had just felt, and place them in circumstances in which himself had been placed. Miraculous effects have been recorded of their representation; but by whom and how were they performed? In answer to this we all know how the primitive stage differed from the modern; that all was on a magnificent scale, that the actors were transformed to giants, and the strength of their voices increased by a metallic mouthpiece. But that which formed their chief distinction were their independent habits of feeling, of sentiment, of invention. This is illustrated by an anecdote of their theatre. Polus, the first actor on the stage, was preparing to perform the part of Electra. In this piece Electra embraces the

urn supposed to hold the remains of Orestes. The Greek actor ordered that the urn containing the ashes of his own son should be brought from the tomb and conveyed to the theatre; and when, on the stage, this urn was offered to him and the father bent over it, he rent the air with no mimic grief or insincere howlings, but the whole audience was melted with the moving picture of his grief and lamentation.

When the light had failed from the Greek theatre which those masters had poured upon it, it would have violated the common order of events had an equal illumination been rekindled. The frivolous Comic Muse, hitherto of slight esteem, grew into favour and trode fast on the steps of sceptred Tragedy. The witty and offensive Aristophanes parodied the eloquent declamation of Euripides, mimicked the awful port of princes and gods, and converted the general satire of the old comedians into a vicious personal ribaldry. Finally the civil authority interfered to stop its flagrant abuses.

The tragedy was not inherited by Rome, which scrupulously incorporated all the arts of Athens. It was too delicate a treasure to be

lightly transmitted by instruction or won with the spoils.

In France, during the dark ages, the castle of feudal chieftains witnessed a second rude drama, the name and character of which is all that remains. The "Mysteries" served to shew that it was a natural expression of the human feelings.

In England, the progress was somewhat similar, but the first productions which were marked for fame are works of prodigious power and their origin is sudden and unaccountable. From an obscurity which none had illuminated since Chaucer's era, there suddenly issued a series of elegant and original performances equal in power to the masterpieces of Greece, and adorned by a strain of such delicate feeling, and the wisdom of solid and rare philosophy, in verse wherein was breathed the very melody of nature to arrest the soul withal.

Over all this fair miracle a hideous corruption was spread which made every page offensive. It is wonderful how intimately health and poison, beauty and destruction, can combine, and nowhere shall we find such a fatal illustration. The inhabitants of England have sat down rejoicing in the light which Shakspeare's genius

hath shed around them, unconscious or careless of the defilement which attends us. . . .

Shall we be told that Shakspeare painted nature as he found it, that we only see here what we see elsewhere in the scenes of life daily? No, he paints nature, not in innocence and its primitive condition, but not until it has become depraved itself, and its exhibition will deprave others. Nor is the general moral which is to be deduced from the whole pure. . . .

Shakspeare assumed the commanding attitude of bold unrivalled genius; men saw that the inspiration was genuine, and few were so scrupulous as to ask if all were here. . . .

The statue is colossal but its diabolical features poison our admiration for the genius which conceived and the skilful hand which carved it.

[THE EXACT SCIENCES]

Of all the sciences the science of the Mind is necessarily the most worthy and elevating. But it cannot precede the others. Natural Philosophy and Mathematics must be sought in order to gain first, the comforts of civilized life, and then the data whence our moral reasonings proceed. It is an old saying that all are a circle, and necessarily depend on one another; that great improvements

in Astronomy involve a knowledge of Mathematics, and so of the others. We exist to moral purposes and are proud to call ourselves intellectual beings! Hence, one would say, Leave matter to the beasts that are only matter, and indulge your peculiar and distinguishing faculties. But then our reason and all our mental powers are called into as active exercise in demonstrating the properties of matter as the properties of mind, and the beasts are alike incapable of both. So your plea confutes itself.

With regard then to the study of Natural Philosophy, I do not think any one study so contributes to expand the mind as our first correct notions of this science;—when we first know that the sky is not a shell, but a vacant space, that the world is not still and a plain, but a little globe, performing, as one of a system, immense revolutions. . . .

DEDICATION

Quem fugis? aut quis te nostris complexibus arcet?
Haec memorans, cinerem et sopitos suscitat ignes.
Virgilian lot.

(*This song to one whose unimproved talents and unattained friendship have interested the writer in his character and fate.*)

By the unacknowledged tie
Which binds us to each other,
By the pride of feeling high
Which friendship's name can smother;

By the cold encountering eyes
Whose language deeply thrilling
Rebelled against the prompt surmise
Which told the heart was willing;

By all which you have felt and feel,
My eager glance returning,
I offer to this silent zeal
On youthful altars burning.

All the classic hours which fill
The little urn of honour;
Minerva guide and pay the pen
Your hand conferred upon her.

TRANSLATION OF MONTAIGNE TO MONSIEUR CHARRON

May fortune bless thee
And friends caress thee
Remote from care, but loved by me;
The gifts of Pleasure
In boundless treasure
Not withheld, but poured on thee.
Garlanded with roses
At eve thy friend reposes,
Yet looks for joys that boundless be.

R. W. E.

When Jove's grey daughter, beldame Care,
On crimson couches first was laid,
Her thousand wrinkled children there
Scowled on poor Man — to all betrayed.

There was a little Fairy then
Of crooked form, whose name was S,
Who bade the miscreants join to form
A smiling cherub, hight *Caress*.

"Doth not the Queen of the woods gather the secrets of futurity when she reads the decaying oak leaves, and can she not tell the young man how to guide his steps in life?"[1]

1 Question of a youth to a weird woman in a fragment of a fairy story of R. W. E.'s.

JOURNAL IV

THE WIDE WORLD, NO. 2

[EMERSON was now a Senior, seventeen years old, and with his loved brother, Edward Bliss Emerson, who had just entered the Freshman class, occupied room No. 9 Hollis.]

October, 1820.

I have determined to grant a new charter to my pen, having finished my commonplace book, which I commenced in January, and with as much success as I was ambitious of — whose whole aim was the small utility of being the exchequer to the accumulating store of organized verbs, nouns and substantives, to wit, sentences. It has been a source of entertainment, and accomplished its end, and on this account has induced me to repeat or rather continue the experiment. Wherefore, On!

To forget for a season the world and its concerns, and to separate the soul for sublime contemplation till it has lost the sense of circumstances, and is decking itself in plumage drawn out from the gay wardrobe of Fancy, is a recre-

ation and a rapture of which few men can avail themselves. But this privilege, in common with other great gifts of Nature, is attainable if not inborn. It is denied altogether to three classes at least of mankind, viz.: the queer, the downright, and the ungainly. This is by no means a careless or fanciful classification, although rather a restricted sense belongs to these epithets. By "the queer" I understand those animals of oddity whose disgusting eccentricity flows from a conceited character and the lack of common sense. I characterize "the downright" only as people who do *jobs*. And "the ungainly" points exclusively at some quaint lantern countenances who have at one time and another shocked my nerves and nauseated my taste by their hideous aspects. With cautious explanation we advance from these degraded stages of intellect, this doleful frontispiece of creation, to prouder orders of mind. Ordinary men claim the intermittent exercise of this power of beautiful abstraction; but to the souls only of the mightiest is it given to command the disappearance of land and sea, and mankind and things, and they vanish. Then comes the Enchanter illuminating the glorious vision with hues from heaven, granting thoughts of other worlds gilded with lustre of ravishment and delight, till

the Hours, teeming with loveliness and Joy, roll by uncounted. Exulting in the exercise of this prerogative, the poet, truly called so, has entreated the reluctant permission.

> "And forever shalt thou dwell
> In the spirit of this spell."

October 6th, 1820

I have listened this evening to an eloquent lecture of the elegant Professor of French and Spanish Literature[1] on the subject of the extent of the language, a subject which bears on the face of it dullness and dread — every soul present warmly acknowledged the force of delineation when the great deluge of the French language, sweeping down all the feeble barriers of ephemeral dialects, carried captive the languages and literature of all Europe, while in the commotions of politics the German thrones were dashed to pieces against each other on this great and wide sea.

> When bounding Fancy leaves the clods of earth
> To riot in the regions of her birth,

1 George Ticknor, Smith Professor of the French and German Languages and Literature. To this Chair the Corporation and Overseers added a Professorship of *Belles Letters*. Longfellow and Lowell were in turn Mr. Ticknor's successors.

Where, robed in light, the Genii of the Stars
Launch in refulgent space their diamond cars,
Or in pavilions of celestial pride,
Serene above all influence beside,
Vent the bold joy which swells the glorious soul
Rich with the rapture of secure controul,
Onward, around, their golden visions stray
Till only Glory can their range delay.

Well, I began with prose and have mustered up ten lines of poetry, which will answer rarely to lighten the labour of the next theme. It is half past 10, and time to put away The Wide World and its concerns, and consign my indolent limbs to comfortable repose. *Ergo* cease, my pen,

"To witch the world with noble penmanship!"

October 12th.

I should write a theme this morning, but cruel Destiny forbids the thought of rainbow colours to rise. I want to write poetry to add to "When bounding," etc.

. . . . . .

October 15th.

Different mortals improve resources of happiness which are entirely different. This I find more apparent in the familiar instances obvious

at college recitations. My more fortunate neighbours exult in the display of mathematical study,[1] while I, after feeling the humiliating sense of dependence and inferiority, which, like the goading, soul-sickening sense of extreme poverty, palsies effort, esteem myself abundantly compensated, if with my pen, I can marshal whole catalogues of nouns and verbs, to express to the life the imbecility I felt. . . .

Mr. Everett says: — "the shout of admiration is lost ere it reaches the arches of heaven, but there is an all-seeing eye which looks deep down into the recesses of the obscurest heart. It is a small matter to abstain from vice to which there is no temptation, or to perform a virtue which is standing by you with crowns for your head; but it is the obscure, struggling and unsuccessful virtue which meets with reward."

Exhibition night. This tumultuous day is done. The character of its thought-weather is

1 Just before entering College, the young Emerson wrote to his elder brother William: "To tell the truth, I do not think it necessary to understand Mathematicks and Greek thoroughly to be a good and useful, or even a great man. Aunt Mary would certainly tell you so, and I think you yourself believe it, if you did not think it a dangerous doctrine to tell a Freshman. But do not be afraid, for I mean to study them through, but with equal interest to other studies."

always extremely singular. Fuller than any other day of great thoughts and poets' dreams, of hope and joy and pride, and then closed with merriment and wine, evincing or eliciting gay, fraternal feeling enough, but brutalized and defiled with excess of physical enjoyment; leaving the mind distracted and unfit for pursuits of soberness. Barnwell's Oration contained sublime images. — One was of great power — a terrible description of the fire-tempest which overshadowed Sodom and Gomorrha — another description of the waterspout of the Pacific was noble. A great struggle of ambition is going on between Barnwell and Upham.[1] Thundering and lightning are faint and tame descriptions of the course of astonishing eloquence. You double the force of painting if you describe it as it is.

1 Robert Woodward Barnwell, of South Carolina, later a United States Senator, and President of South Carolina College, was a classmate loved and admired. After the Civil War, which had greatly reduced his fortunes, his Class sent him messages of affection, accompanied, I think, with substantial aid (of course unasked), and in this movement Emerson was active. They died in the same year.

Charles Wentworth Upham of Salem, author of a work on Salem Witchcraft, and a brother-in-law of Dr. O. W. Holmes, was much valued by Emerson. They were in the Divinity School together. He was Mayor of Salem and a member of Congress.

The flashing eye, that fills up the chasms of language, the living brow, throwing meaning and intellect into every furrow and every frown; the stamping foot, the labouring limbs, the desperate gesture, these must all be seen in their strong exercise, before the vivid conception of their effect can be adequately felt. And then a man must separate and discipline and intoxicate his mind before he can enjoy the glory of the orator, when mighty thoughts come crowding on the soul; he must learn to harrow up unwelcome recollections and concentrate woe and horror and disgust till his own heart sickens; he must stretch forth his arm and array the bright ideas which have settled around him till they gather to forceful and appalling sublimity.

October 24th.

I begin to believe in the Indian doctrine of eye-fascination. The cold blue eye of —— has so intimately connected him with my thoughts and visions that a dozen times a day, and as often by night, I find myself wholly wrapt up in conjectures of his character and inclinations. We have had already two or three long profound stares at each other. Be it wise or weak or superstitious, I must know him.

Perhaps thy lot in life is higher
Than the Fates assign to me,
While they fulfil thy large desire,
And bid my hopes as visions flee.
But grant me still in joy or sorrow,
In grief or hope, to claim thy heart,
And I will then defy the morrow
Whilst I fulfil a loyal part.[1]

October 25.

I find myself often idle, vagrant, stupid and hollow. This is somewhat appalling and, if I do not discipline myself with diligent care, I shall suffer severely from remorse and the sense of inferiority hereafter. All around me are industrious and will be great, I am indolent and shall be insignificant. Avert it, heaven! avert it, virtue! I need excitement.

November 1.

My opinion of —— was strangely lowered by hearing that he was "proverbially idle." This was redeemed by learning that he was a "superior man." This week, a little eventful in college, has brought a share of its accidents to him.

1 These verses have a paper over them arranged so that it can be turned up; and on the paper is an india ink profile and bust, presumably a memory-sketch of Gay.

Perhaps thy lot in life is higher
Than the fates assign to me
While they fulfil thy large desire
And bid my hopes as visions flee
But grant me still in joy or sorrow
In grief or hope to claim thy heart
And I with them defy the morrow
Whilst I fulfil a loyal part.

MEMORY SKETCH OF MARTIN GAY, BY EMERSON

In his Journal for 1821

November 2.

What a grand man was Milton! so marked by nature for the great Epic Poet that was to bear up the name of these latter times. In "Reason of Church Government urged against Prelaty," written while young, his spirit is already communing with itself and stretching out in its colossal proportions and yearning for the destiny he was appointed to fulfil.

November 10.

"The Abbot" must be to its author "a source of unmixed delight and unchastened pride."

November 10.

A RECIPE!!!

Young Waldo, when in your thick-coming whims, you feel an itching to *engrave*, take a piece of glass and cover it with a thin film of wax or isinglass and trace the proposed figure with a steel point. Place this over a vessel containing a mixture of powdered fluor-spar, and sulphuric acid gently heated. The acid gas coming into contact with the uncovered parts of the glass combines with and removes the silex, as well probably as the alkali with which it is united, and lines more or less deep are thus formed —

according to Gorham's Chemistry (Article, *Silicon*), page 265, volume one.

Observe this. Mr. Everett notices that a temperate climate has always been found necessary to a high national character.

Also, Mr. Waldo, if you would like to find the sublimest attainable sayings on the destruction of nations, *Vide* 4th book of the Sybilline Collections.

November 18th.

I shall subjoin some recipes for the terrible void which ruins ever and anon the mind's peace, and is otherwise called Unhappiness.

1. Take Scott's Novels and read carefully the mottoes of the chapters; or, if you prefer reading a novel itself, take the "Bride of Lammermoor."[1]

2. Sometimes (seldom) the finest parts of Cowper's "Task" will answer the purpose. I refer to the home-scenes.

3. For the same reason that I would take Scott's mottoes, I would also take an old tragedy such as Ben Jonson's, Otway's, Congreve's; in

1 Although Mr. Emerson seldom read a novel after his youth, and cared little for them, especially disliking "dismal stories," he retained through life his early affection for this novel, forlorn from the beginning, and most tragic in the end.

short, any thing of that kind which leads as far as possible from the usual trains of thought.

4. Make recipes to add to this list.

December 4th, 1820.

Here at Cambridge in my cheerless schoolroom.[1] Sunday Evening I heard Mr. Everett preach at the Old South a charity sermon — one of his most (perhaps the most) eloquent efforts.

. . . . . .

December 5th.

It appears to me that it is a secret of the art of eloquence to know that a powerful aid would be derived from the use of forms of language which were generally known to men in their infancy, and which now, under another and unknown garb, but forcibly reminding them of early impressions, are likely to be mistaken for opinions whose beginning they cannot recollect, and therefore suppose them innate. At least, if by such operation they cannot convince the

1 It was then the custom, which continued for nearly forty years afterward, to allow the poorer students to help themselves through College by teaching, often far from Cambridge, during their college course, presenting themselves at due time for examinations.

mind, they may serve to win attention by this awakening but ambiguous charm. By these forms of language I mean a paraphrase of some sentence in a *Primer* or other child's book common to the country. The spell would be more perfect, perhaps, if, instead of such a paraphrase, the words of a sentence should be modulated to the cadence of the aforesaid infant literature. I dare not subjoin an example.[1]

The human soul, the world, the universe are labouring on to their magnificent consummation. We are not fashioned thus marvellously for naught. The straining conceptions of man, the monuments of his reason and the whole furniture of his faculties is [*sic*] adapted to mightier views of things than the mightiest he has yet beheld. Roll on, then, thou stupendous Universe, in sublime, incomprehensible solitude, in an unbeheld but sure path. The finger of God is pointing out your way. And when ages shall have elapsed and time is no more, while the stars shall fall from heaven and the Sun become darkness and the moon blood, human intellect, puri-

1 Here a water-colour of the "Three Wise men of Goshen" [Gotham] at sea in their bowl — all with the "mutton-chop" whiskers of the day.

fied and sublimed, shall mount to perfection of unmeasured and ineffable enjoyment of knowledge and glory. Man shall come to the presence of Jehovah. (In the manner of Chateaubriand.)

December 15th.

I claim and clasp a moment's respite from this irksome school to saunter in the fields of my own wayward thought. The afternoon was gloomy and preparing to snow, — dull, ugly weather. But when I came out from the hot, steaming, stoved, stinking, dirty, A-B spelling-school-room, I almost soared and mounted the atmosphere at breathing the free magnificent air, the noble breath of life. It was a delightful exhilaration; but it soon passed off.

It is impossible that the distribution of rewards hereafter should not be in gradation. How inconsistent with justice would it be that all the boundless varieties of desert and condition should be levelled to a single lot — all, from the agonized martyr, who was sawn asunder for the faith, to the deathbed of a modern Christian, where a soul which was never tempted, and a sinless innocence which was never tried, has sighed out a harmless life on beds of down and accompanied and piloted to heaven by the

prayerful sympathy of the saints on earth. (In the manner of Everett.)

The other day read Edinburgh Review of Drummond's "Academic Questions." The review and the reviewed are both beautiful specimens of an elegant metaphysical style.

Attended Mr. Ticknor's Lecture on Voltaire.

1821

January 9th, 1821.

Have heard to-day another consecrated display of genius — of the insinuating and overwhelming effect of eloquent manners and style, when made sacred and impregnable by the subject which they are to enforce — Mr. Everett's sermon before the Howard Benevolent Society. He told a very affecting anecdote. "I have known a woman in this town go out to work with her own hands to pay for the wooden coffin which was to enclose the dust of her only child. I prayed with her when there was none to stand by her but he who was to bear that dust to the tomb."

There was a vast congregation, but while he spoke as silent as death. Unluckily, in the pauses, however, they shook the house with

their hideous convulsions; for when he raised his handkerchief to his face after a pause in the sermon, it seemed almost a concerted signal for the Old South to cough.

Let those now cough who never coughed before,
And those who always cough, cough now the more.

February 7th.

The religion of my Aunt[1] is the purest and most sublime of any I can conceive. It appears to be based on broad and deep and remote principles of expediency and adequateness to an end — principles which few can comprehend and fewer feel. It labours to reconcile the apparent insignificancy of the field to the surpassing grandeur of the Operator, and founds the benignity and Mercy of the Scheme on adventurous but probable comparisons of the condition of other orders of being. Although it is an intellectual offspring of beauty and splendour, if that were all, it breathes a practical spirit of rigid and austere devotion. It is independent of forms and ceremonies, and its ethereal nature gives a glow

1 Miss Mary Moody Emerson, his inspiring correspondent and severe, though loving and secretly proud, critic. His sketch of her is printed in vol. x (*Lectures and Biographical Sketches*) of his Works.

of soul to her whole life. She is the Weird-woman of her religion, and conceives herself always bound to walk in narrow but exalted paths, which lead onward to interminable regions of rapturous and sublime glory.

March 14th.

I am reading Price, on Morals, and intend to read it with care and commentary. I shall set down here what remarks occur to me upon the matter or manner of his argument. On the 56th page, Dr. Price says that right and wrong are not determined by any reasoning or deduction, but by the ultimate perception of the human mind. It is to be desired that this were capable of satisfactory proof, but, as it is in direct opposition to the sceptical philosophy, it cannot stand unsupported by strong and sufficient evidence. I will however read more and see if it is proved or no. — He saith that the Understanding is this ultimate determiner.

Cambridge, *March* 25.
Sabbath.

I am sick — if I should die what would become of me? We forget ourselves and our destinies in health, and the chief use of temporary

sickness is to remind us of these concerns. I must improve my time better. I must prepare myself for the great profession I have purposed to undertake. I am to give my soul to God and withdraw from sin and the world the idle or vicious time and thoughts I have sacrificed to them; and let me consider this as a resolution by which I pledge myself to act in all variety of circumstances, and to which I must recur often in times of carelessness and temptation, to measure my conduct by the rule of conscience.

CAMBRIDGE, *April* 1.

It is Sabbath again, and I am for the most part recovered. Is it a wise dispensation that we can never know what influence our own prayers have in restoring the health we have prayed God to restore? It has been thought by some that in these immediate effects they have no influence; in general, that their good is prospective and that the world is governed by Providence through the instrumentality of general laws, which are only broken on the great occasions of the world or other portions of the Creator's works. But what have I wandered from? I think that it infinitely removes heavenly dispensations from earthly ones. This manner of giving gifts with-

out expressing the reason for which they are bestowed, and leaving it to the heart to make the application, and to discover the giver, is worthy of a supreme, ineffable intelligence.

Well, I am sorry. . . . The anecdote which I accidentally heard of —— shews him more like his neighbours than I should wish him to be. I shall have to throw him up after all, as a cheat of fancy. Before I ever saw him, I wished my *friend* to be different from any individual I had seen. I invested him with a solemn cast of mind, full of poetic feeling, and an idolater of friendship, and possessing a vein of rich sober thought.

For a year I have entertained towards him the same feelings and should be sorry to lose him altogether before we have ever exchanged above a dozen words.

May 2.

I am more puzzled than ever with ——'s conduct. He came out to meet me yesterday, and I, observing him, just before we met, turned another corner and most strangely avoided him. This morning I went out to meet him in a different direction, and stopped to speak with a lounger, in order to be directly in ——'s way; but —— turned into the first gate and went

towards Stoughton. All this [took place (?)] without any apparent design and as [soberly (?)] as if both were intent on some tremendous affair.[1]

May 10*th.*

Huzza for my Magician! he engages me finely.[2] I am as interested in the tale and as anxious to know the end as any other reader could be. By the by, this tale of mine might be told with powerful effect by a man of good voice and natural eloquence.

June 10.

Mr. Everett, in his Artillery Election sermon, to preface his own prophecy that the century now begun (i. e. third century since the Plymouth landing) will be the most important in determining the future fates of America, told this story: — In 1417, when Huss was bound to the stake at Prague, he declared amid his tor-

1 All the above paragraph was purposely obscured with heavy ink-marks. The bracketed words, however, are the only doubtful ones.

2 This was a romance on which the young Emerson was for the moment working. In the page or so of it which remains in one of his blotting-books, King Richard Cœur de Leon, worn out and sick, is confessing to a friar how the presumptuous sins of his youth have been punished by haunting remorse.

tures that after a hundred years a retribution should be made on papacy. The inhabitants of Prague wrote his words "*Post centum annos*" upon their standard and in their records, and in 1517 the Reformation by Luther began.

Books Lent

Kett's Elements, both vols., to Angier.
Telemaque, to Stackpole 1.
Lacroix, to Gutterson.
Locke, 2. Vol., to Hill.
III and IV Cantoes of Childe Harold, — both lost.
Guy Mannering, to Lane.
Rhyming Dictionary, to Williams, A. B.
Blair's Rhetoric (abridgement), to Hooper.
Lay of the Last Minstrel, Lothrop.
Lady of the Lake, to *Idem*.
Adams's Antiquities.

Books Inquirenda

Mather's Magnalia.
Dunlop's History of Fiction.
Mattaire.
Swift. Froissart.
Davy's Chemistry.
Teignmouth's life of Jones.
Simmon's life of Milton. 3 Vol. of Brit. Plutarch.

Chaucer.
Montaigne's Essays.
Germany (Stael).
Drummond's Academical Questions.
Price, on Morals.
Humboldt's Work on America.
Smith's Virginia.
Robertson's S. America.
History of Philip II.
Life of Shakspeare.

Subjects for Themes

Destruction of a city; poetry.

(Forensic) Whether Civil Government be founded on a compact expressed or implied.

The domestic relations as restraints on an adventurous spirit.

Influence of weather on intellectual temperament.

Character of any fancy portrait, as for instance, [1]

1 The hand points to a respectable sketch of a man of a somewhat classic type, his head filleted, and below him a sea-monster with the feet, just bitten from the man, in his mouth. In place of these the man has miraculously grown a trifid fish-tail on which he stands gracefully, and, looking down on the monster with philosophic scorn, is saying (on a scroll), "My feet are gone. I am a fish. Yes, I am a fish."

Authors or Books quoted or referred to in Journals of 1820 and 1821

Bible, *Apocrypha.*

Pythagoras; Anaxagoras; Aristotle;

Xenophon's and Plato's accounts of Socrates;

Homer; Æschylus; Sophocles; Euripides; Aristophanes; Archelaus; Theocritus (*apud* Kennet's *Greek Poets*).

Cicero; Lucretius; Virgil; Horace; Epictetus; Arrian; Marcus Antoninus; Epicurus;

Zendavesta, (*apud* Gibbon);

Arthurian Romances; De Joinville, *Chronicle of St. Louis;*

Plays and Masques of Shakespeare, Ben Jonson (The Alchymist), Beaumont and Fletcher, Massinger, Otway;

Bacon, *Novum Organum;*

Milton, *Paradise Lost, Comus, Samson Agonistes;*

Rev. Isaac Barrow;

Montaigne, *Essays;* Montesquieu, *Lettres Persanes;* Chateaubriand;

Cowper, *Task;* Dryden, *Absalom and Achitophel;*

Corneille; Racine;

Hobbes; Swift; Sterne; Addison; Pope;

Descartes; Cudworth; Locke; Woolaston; Shaftsbury;

Mosheim; Hume, *Essays;* Priestly; Paley; Dugald Stewart; Dr. Reid; Dr. Price, *On Morals;* Mellen, *On Divine Vengeance;* Forsyth, *Principles of Moral Science;* Bishop Hall.

Johnson, *Lives of the Poets;*

Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire;*

Burke, *Regicide Peace;* Bissel, *Life of Burke;*

Edward Search's [Abraham Tucker] Writings.

Sismondi, *History of the Italian Republics;*

Scott, *Guy Mannering*, *Old Mortality*, *Monastery*, and *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border;*

Lockhart, *Spanish Ballads;*

Moore, *Lalla Rookh;* Campbell, *Poems;*

Wordsworth, *Excursion;* Southey, *Curse of Kehama;*

Byron, *Manfred*, *Corsair*, and *Childe Harold;*

Charles Lamb, *Essays;*

Maclaurin, *Life of Sir Isaac Newton;*

Dean Milman, *Samor, the Lord of the Bright City*, and *Fall of Jerusalem;*

Hillhouse, *Percy's Masque;*

Bryant, *Waterfowl*, and *Murdered Traveller;*

Edward Everett's Lectures;

Edinburgh and Quarterly Reviews.

THE UNIVERSE

[During the years 1820 and 1821 Emerson kept a Quotation Book, named as above, made up of passages from his miscellaneous reading in the College Library or whatever other treasure-houses of letters were open to him. These passages are neatly copied in a small hand on folio sheets, numbered, which were afterwards folded once and placed in a cover. The range is somewhat remarkable and a list is given below.]

Spenser's *View of the State of Ireland*, *apud* Warton.

Diversions of Queen Elizabeth's maids of honor; Harrison, *apud Hollinshed's Chronicle.*

Verses of Homer, sung by him and a chorus of boys before the houses of the rich men in Samos; original Greek and a metrical rendering, *apud* Basil Kennet's *Lives and Characters of the Greek Poets*, 1697.

Pope Gregory VII's Excommunication of the Emperor Henry IV, *apud* Berington's *Abelard and Heloisa.*

Queen Elizabeth's infatuation for the Earl of Leicester, *apud* Camden's *Annales Elizabethae.*

Extract from a scene in Byron's *Manfred.*

Chaucer's account of his sufferings in prison.

Extract from letter of Cicero to Plancus, Middleton's *Cicero*.

Extract from poem by Cornwall, describing a pauper's burial.

Close of the conference between the Jewess Rebecca and Brian de Bois Gilbert, in Scott's *Ivanhoe*.

Death and funeral of Spenser, *Camden*.

Erasmus's (Latin) epigram to Sir T. More, when he did not return the borrowed horse of the latter.

Alleged epitaph written by Virgil for himself.

The pedantry of the times of Queen Elizabeth, Warton.

On the Art of Rhetorick, Richard Wilson, *apud* Burnett.

On Bessarion, by Marcus Ficinus, *apud* Hody, *De Graecis Illustribus*.

Suppressed passage from Soliloquy of Bertram in play by Maturin, *apud* Edinburgh Review.

Passage from Shipwreck in Byron's *Don Juan*.

Extract from Sermon of Rev. Isaac Barrow, on comparative ineffectiveness of Human Laws.

Concerning Shakespeare. Ben Jonson's *Discoveries*.

Concerning Bacon.

Collins's *Ode*, "How sleep the brave."

Extract from *Hebrew Melodies*, Byron.

Meg Merrilies' denunciation of the Laird of Ellangowan. Her prophecy of good to his son. *Guy Mannering.*

On shaking off Cupid's yoke, and on Emulation; Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida.*

Song of Runic Bard [quoted later in "Poetry and Imagination" in *Letters and Social Aims*, p. 59], Godwin.

Sforza's speech on his misfortunes. *Duke of Milan;* Massinger.

Meditation on *Conscience;* Bishop Hall.

Concluding passage of C. W. Upham's Oration, Exhibition, Aug. 1820.

The shadowing out of *Paradise Lost;* a long extract from Milton's *Reason of Church Government urged against Prelaty*, beginning "Although a poet, soaring in the high region of his fancies, with his garland and singing robes about him" etc.

Speech of Sir Bohort over the dead body of Lancelot. Ellis's Specimens of *Early English Romances.*

The Mourning Bride; Congreve.

The power of Chance in human inventions; Bacon's *Novum Organum* (Part 2 Section II).

Epitaph on Pizarro; Southey.

Long Extract from *Idealist;* Drummond's *Academical Questions.*

Reasonings *a priori; Moral Outline,* Dugald Stewart.

The angels the guides of the heavenly bodies; sermon of Jeremy Taylor.

Dialogue between a tyrant and a Stoic; Arrian, Priestley's translation.

Favourite passage, beginning "The unearthly voices ceased" in Scott's *Lay of the Last Minstrel,* Canto I.

Dreams, from *The Castle of Indolence,* Thomson.

Extracts from Scenes between Viola and the Duke, in *Twelfth Night,* Shakespeare.

Spenser's lamentation; *Mother Hubberd's Tale.*

The Nightingale; Thomson's *Seasons.*

Extract from the *Magnalia Christi* of Cotton Mather, as to the number of settlers in Massachusetts Bay.

Lord Bacon's expostulation with Queen Elizabeth, in a letter to the Earl of Devonshire.

Song from *Gipsies Metamorphosed,* Ben Jonson.

"Ode to Melancholy"; *The Passionate Madman,* Beaumont and Fletcher.

Extract from *Lord Herries' Complaint*, C. K. Sharpe, *apud* Drake's Essays.

The Origin of Fable; *Éloge de Fontaine.*

The Mariner's Dream.

Song of the Clown, *Twelfth Night.*

The Lombards' loss of opportunity to establish federated republics; Hallam's *Middle Ages.*

Decline of Ecclesiastical Power of Rome; Hallam's *Middle Ages.*

The defensive power and successes of federated republics. Sismondi, *Histoire des Républiques Italiens du Moyen Age.*

The bad omens attending the commencement of hostilities when Charles I set up his standard at Nottingham; *Clarendon's History.*

The character of Cromwell; *Clarendon's History.*

To the herb Rosemary; H. Kirke White.

Preface to one of Elizabeth's costly masques; Ben Jonson.

To a Waterfowl, William Cullen Bryant.

Close of the *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire;* from Gibbon's *Memoirs* of his own Life and Writings.

A student's thought compared to a river which

one undertakes to dam; Tucker's ("Edward Search") *Light of Nature.*

Deliberation and investigation compared to the hunting of a hound; Tucker.

JOURNAL

TEACHER

JOURNAL V

THE WIDE WORLD, NO. 3

[EMERSON seems to have kept no journal for the last half of 1821.

He had graduated in the summer of 1821, number thirty in a class of fifty-nine. His actual scholarship in the required branches must have been much lower, for it must be remembered that any misconduct might remove a greater or less number of marks for recitations. Hence a boy of quiet disposition might stand in the end much higher than a brilliant but disorderly one. But Emerson, none the less, had, night and day, been educating himself in his own way. He came just within the number of those to whom "parts" at Commencement were assigned, and in those days they were always delivered. His was the *Character of John Knox*, in a Colloquy on Knox, Penn, and Wesley, in which function he is said to have been rather negligent. He was Class Poet, a doubtful honour, as at least six had been asked before him, and refused.

His brother William, who graduated in 1818, was doing his best to maintain the family, and it

became Waldo's duty to help, for the case was urgent. William, aged twenty-two, had recently opened a finishing school for young ladies, in Boston, at his mother's house, and now offered his brother, aged eighteen, the place of assistant. It was a trying place for a bashful boy, unused to girls, but he accepted. (See Cabot's Memoirs, pages 69–72 and 86.)]

Boston, *January* 12, 1822.

After a considerable interval I am still willing to think that these commonplace books are very useful and harmless things,—at least sufficiently so, to warrant another trial.

CONTRAST

The principle of Contrast which we find engraven within— . . . how came it there, whence did we derive it? Either the Deity has written it as one of his laws upon the human mind, or we have derived it from an observation of the invariable course of human affairs. . . .

In this principle is lodged the safety of human institutions and human life. For suppose ambition excite against the peace of the world one of those incarnate fiends which have, at different periods, arisen to destroy the peace and good order

of one community after another, and of nation after nation. Gradually the lust of excess engendered by sudden prosperity debauches every virtue and steals away the Moral sense. The insolence of power tramples upon the laws of God and the rights of man. . . . Here, when the day of triumph burns with consuming splendour — here, the mind itself pauses to anticipate change near at hand. The victor must cease. Else would the very stones cry out. Day and Night contend against him; the Elements which he wielded rebel and crush him; the clouds nurse their thunders to blast him; he is lifted up on rebellious spears between heaven and earth unworthy and abhorred of both, to perish.

TNAMURYA[1]

"When that spell which can only be felt is thrown over the soul by the magic of genius,

1 Shift the letters of this word about, and they spell "Aunt Mary." Her nephew thus marks the frequent passages from her letters to him which he copies into his journals. Years later he wrote a sketch of the life of this remarkable woman, his Sibyl. She was his father's younger sister, and daughter of William Emerson, the young minister of Concord in the days of the Revolution. In her infant ears had rung the noise of the firing at Concord Fight, close by the Manse. Her letters to her nephew Ralph, whom she idolized, continued through years

'Now lettest thou thy servant depart where all is boundless genius — or let us tarry forever in this grave, if thus illuminated,' is the adoring language of the heart. Is it not a well known principle of human nature that moments of enthusiasm can produce sacrifices which demand no proportionate virtue to those which never pretend to fame?" . . .

RELIGION

The invisible connection between heaven and earth, the solitary principle which unites intellectual beings to an account and makes of men moral beings — religion — is distinct and peculiar, alike in its origin and in its end, from all other relations. It is essential to the Universe. You seek in vain to contemplate the order of things apart from its existence. You can no more banish this than you can separate from yourself the notions of Space and Duration. Through all the perverse mazes and shadows of infidelity the

from remote New England towns where she boarded, were one of the strongest influences of the earlier part of his life, quickening and enlarging his thoughts and also provoking him to defend its independence. His deep debt to her he always acknowledged. See "Mary Moody Emerson," in his *Lectures and Biographical Sketches.*"

Light still makes itself visible, until the reluctant mind shudders to acknowledge the eternal encompassing presence of Deity. If you can abstract it from the Universe, the Soul is bewildered by a system of things of which no account can be given; instances of tremendous power — and no hand found to form them; a thousand creations in a thousand spheres all pointing upward to a single point — and no object there to see and receive — it is all a vast anomaly. Restore Religion and you give to those energies a sublime object. . . .

The History of Religion involves circumstances of remarkable interest, and it is almost all that we are able to trace in the passage of the remote ages of the world. It is a beautiful picture, and just as it should be, that in the character of Noah, of Abraham, and the early denizens of the world, we trace no feature which does not belong peculiarly to their religion; — it was their life. It was natural that when the mountains were just swelling upward under the hand of the Creator, when his bow was just built and painted in the sky, when the stone-tables were yet unbroken by Moses which now lie mouldering in fragments upon Sinai — that Men should walk with God. As we come downward

and leave the immediate precincts of the tabernacle, although we become sensible of the progressive departure from the truth, yet each superstition retains the inherent beauty of the first form, disguised and defaced, in some degree, by ill-adjusted and needless apparel. Indeed, the only records by which the early ages of any nation are remembered is their religion. We know nothing of the first empires which grasped the sceptre of the earth in Egypt, Assyria, or Persia, but their modes of worship. And this fact forcibly suggests the idea that the only true and legitimate vehicle of immortality, the only bond of connection which can traverse the long duration which separates the ends of the world and unites the first people to the knowledge and sympathy of the last people, is religion.

We have said that the first nations were remembered by their religion ; and in tracing down their history a little farther until the time of written languages, we find that the first efforts which the human genius made to commit its ideas to permanent signs were exercised upon the great topic which stood uppermost in an unperverted mind. Poetry attempted to fashion a probable picture of the Creation, to explore the character of Providence, to impress upon mankind the

enlightened views of a moral government in the world which had been disclosed to her own eye.

. . . . . .

But the date of *writing* marks the second age in the history of Religion, and we have parted from the more attractive memory of the first. The naked savage who ascends the mountain,— because the dusky summit inclines him to believe that the Great Spirit inhabits there, — and erects a stone as his simple and sincere tribute to the Majesty of that being, is an object infinitely more agreeable to our imagination and feelings than the loftier and more excellent offering of lettered Science. And although reason teaches us that the deliberate devotion of a philosophic mind is more worth than the vague fears of a superstitious one, yet we are apt to inquire if the pride of learning has not been known to harden the mind even to the plain proofs of Divine Providence.

. . . . . .

The difference between the primitive forms of religion and the second dispensation (and likewise the first) consisted in this, that the first were the voluntary offerings of the imagination and the understanding to a sublime but unseen Spirit, and the last were the implicit submissions of

duty, of custom, of fear. For this reason we sympathize more with the savage.

It is somewhat remarkable that, in the simple institutions of the barbarous nations, God was worshipped through sublime and awful images, and nothing mean and disgusting was attributed to his character. It were needless to repeat that Cæsar found the German nations without idols, deeming it unworthy to build a house for him that made the Universe;— or to transcribe the Indian creed of the Great Spirit, so scrupulously pure that it rejected what it could not reconcile of an evil world to a Benevolent Cause, and created an opposite active evil Principle on which to pile the sin and the storm, pain and death which beset human life. Such also was the Persian faith, which thought the Fire no unfit emblem of Divinity; and if the Druid sacrificed men on the altar, an oak forest was the temple, and it was not offered to an ox or an ass, but to an adequate notion of the Supreme Being. In all these the ways of Providence were traced in the hurricane, the sea, the cloud, or the earthquake, and therefore the mind must needs be elevated that would converse with them. But as civilized life advanced, and civil and social institutions were erected, and life became more intellectual,

devotion was degraded by a profane and vulgar idolatry ; . . . The gods and demigods went fast below the standard of human respectability, until the worship of superior beings, the holiest feeling of which the human soul is capable, and that perhaps for which it was made, seems to have almost passed out of repute and name among honest patriots, and Olympus needed to be cleaned of its impurities, and the thrones of heaven to be subverted for the peace of society.

This fact, that the seeds of corruption are buried in the causes of improvement strikes us everywhere in the political, moral, and national history of the world. It seems to indicate the intentions of Providence to limit human perfectibility and to bind together good and evil, like life and death, by indissoluble connection. . . . The idea of *power* seems to have been everywhere at the bottom of the Theology; the human mind has a propensity to refer all its higher feelings, all its veneration for virtue and greatness, to something wherein this attribute is supposed to reside. Cause and Effect is another name for the direction of this sentiment. . . . What are Honour, Mercy, Pride, Humility, Revenge—but sensations which have reference to in-dwelling *power?* Honour is the worthiness

which it gives; Mercy, the temperate forbearance of its exercise; Pride, the self-respect which attends its possession; Humility, the acknowledgement of its existence; Revenge, a barbarous use to which it is put. It is shared among all beings, but in all has a limit and a beginning, on which the mind's eye eagerly fastens, with an immediate attempt to trace the sources whence the subtle principle was derived. It is a great flood which encircles the universe and is poured out in unnumbered channels to feed the fountains of life and the wants of Creation, but everywhere runs back again and is swallowed up in its eternal source. That source is God.

Will the disputes upon the Nature of God, upon Trinitarianism and Unitarianism, never yield to a purer pursuit and to practical inquiry? It is possible, for all we know to the contrary, that God may exist in a threefold Unity; but if it were so, since it is inconceivable to us, he would never have revealed to us such an existence which we cannot describe or comprehend. Infinite Wisdom established the foundations of knowledge in the mind, so that twice two could never make anything else than four. As soon as this can be otherwise, our faith is loosened and science abolished. Three may be one, and one three.

OF POETRY

It is the language of the passions which do not ordinarily find their full expression in the sober strains of prose. We should rest our argument on this: that there seems to be a tendency in the passions to clothe fanciful views of objects in beautiful language. It seems to consist in the pleasure of finding out a connection between a material image and a moral sentiment. Few men are safe when they begin to describe poetry; they talk at random, or hardly prevent the ends of the lines from rhyming, and are like the mimic of a madman who went mad himself. Poetry never offers a distinct set of sensations. Science penetrates the sky, Philosophy explains its adaptation to our wants, and Poetry grasps at its striking phenomena and combines them with the moral sentiment which they naturally suggest. Its images are nothing but the striking occurrences selected from Nature and Art and clothed in an artful combination of sounds. . . . But poetical expression constitutes to half the world the beauty of poetry and in this it seems to resemble Algebra, for both make language an instrument and depend solely upon it without having any abstracted use.

There are few things which the well-wishers of American literature have more at heart than our national poetry. For every thing else, for science, and morals and art they are willing to wait the gradual development, but they are in haste to pluck the bright blossoms from the fair tree which grows fast by the hill of Parnassus. For when a nation has found time for the luxury and refinement of poetry it takes off the reproach of a sluggish genius and of ignorant indifference.

. . . . . .

Poetical expression serves to embellish dull thoughts, but we love better to follow the poet, when the muse is so ethereal and the thought so sublime that language sinks beneath it.

DRAMA

Saturday Evening, *January 19th.*

When a species of composition has been written with success in a brilliant period, and in another and remote land has been likewise known, and after having been discontinued and forgotten is revived in another age and another country — we have every right to say that such an art is agreeable to the dictates of nature. This is the history of the Drama, and it has every reason-

able indication that it will every where flourish under favourable circumstances. It is easy also to distinguish between those parts of it which are unnatural and the forced production of a state of society, and those which are the genuine offspring of the human spirit. In the Mysteries,—the French Drama of the Middle Ages,—such personages were introduced upon the stage as "Such," "Each One," and "Both," and performed their parts as gravely and as much to the satisfaction of a perverted public taste as did ever the most accomplished Iphigenia, Electra, Cæsar. Such a folly as this is evidently the appropriate spawn of the age of the Schools and the pleasantry of confirmed pedantry. It does not follow that, if anything be out of the common course of human experience, it is not natural to the drama and may not talk with ordinary agents. The representation of the dead consorts perfectly with the feelings of the most refined taste, and in every age has formed a part of dramatic entertainment. For the belief in unseen agents is so universal, and indeed is a consequence of a belief in God, that no mind ever revolts at the idea.

A constituent part of the Drama from its very invention was the ornament of scenery.

This suggests itself unavoidably as an important element of the plan which acts altogether by deceiving the audience into the conviction that the actors really *are* the persons whom they represent. The illusion could be best promoted by removing all extraneous circumstances and affording the imagination the help of all the senses. Independently of this, it is a high gratification to be suddenly removed from all the common objects of daily occurrence, and admitted to a spectacle of shining cities, of imposing mountain scenery, of thrones, and of magnificent apparel.

May.

I rejoice in Shakspeare's empire as far as it is reckless of that learning which some dotards make a merit of; but, as sustained on the sensual, regret and abhor his dominion. It is for a still brighter era to erase his deformities, and possibly set a mightier magician over the witcheries of fancy. But to me — to his old admirers, nothing could supply his place. . . .

[A VENTURE IN ROMANCE]

I was the pampered child of the East. I was born where the soft western gale breathed upon me the fragrance of cinnamon groves, and through

the seventy windows of my hall the eye fell on the Arabian harvest. An hundred elephants, apparelled in cloth of gold, carried my train to war, and the smile of the Great King beamed upon Omar. But now—the broad Indian moon looks through the broken arches of my tower, and the wing of Desolation fans me with poisonous airs; the spider's threads are the tapestry which adorns my walls, and the rain of the night is heard in my halls for the music of the daughters of Cashmere. Wail, wail for me, ye who put on honour as gay drapery!

IDEALISM

Deep in the soul a strong delusion dwells,
A curious round of fairly fashioned dreams;
Yet, quietly the pleasant vision swells
Its gay proportions far around, the streams
Of the wide universe their wealth supply,
Their everlasting sources furnish forth
The fabled splendours, whose immortal dye
Colours the scene with hues which mock the summer sky.

And oh how sweetly in youth's seraph soul,
That vision, like the light of heaven, doth rest.
Its name is Life; its Hours their circle roll
Like angels in the robes of morning drest;

And every phantom of the train is blest
Who shakes his plumes upon the odorous air,
Or lights a star upon his azure crest;
And while the lovely beam reposes there,
Joy in the guileless heart his welcome will prepare.

The circle of the sciences is no more firmly bound together than the circle of the virtues; but, in the first, a man cannot hope to be thoroughly acquainted with all, for they are in some degree incompatible; whereas, in the last, his character will be defective if it do not combine the whole, and form that harmony which results from all.

JOURNAL VI

THE WIDE WORLD, NO. 4

DEDICATION

BOSTON, *February* 22, 1822.

I have invoked successively the Muse, the fairies, the witches, and Wisdom to preside over my creations; I have summoned Imagination from within, and Nature from without; I have called on Time, and assembled about the slight work the Hours of his train — But the Powers were unpropitious; fate was averse. Some other spell must be chaunted, some other melody sung. I will devote it to the dead. The mind shall anticipate a few fleeting hours, and borrow its tone from what all that have been are, and all that are will shortly be. All that adorns this world are the gifts which they left in their passage through it. To these monuments which they bequeathed, and to their shades which watch in the universe, I apply for excitement, and I dedicate my short-lived flowers.[1]

1 The duties to the dead implied in this dedication, however, seem to have slipped the mind of the young writer, after he turned the page, until he nearly reached the end of the book.

CONTINUATION OF SOME REMARKS UPON PROVIDENCE

Saturday Eve., *February* 23.

No elaborate argument can remove the fact which strikes the senses, and which is the first and chief difficulty in the way of the belief of an omnipotent good Principle, namely, the existence of evil in the world, and next, the great share it has in the texture of human life, and its successful opposition to virtue and happiness. If we suppose the character of the Author to be unmixed Goodness, the work must be likewise pure, and an ultimate failure of success subtracts Wisdom and Omnipotence (if indeed the one be not involved in the other) from the qualities of the forming Being, that is, — demonstrates him not to be God. Human wisdom sees the imperfection of the part, and labours to make out the perfection of the whole from the analogies of the universe which fall under its eye, from its judgments upon the language which testimony attributes to this Creator, and from the intuitive and acquired conclusions which it forms upon Nature.[1]

1 This argument, though, after the above paragraph, leading nowhere and ending conventionally when the young writer tired of it, is introduced because of the criticism so often made

But another great testimony to which the mind will naturally turn to confirm or efface its convictions of a superintending hand, is History; to see if Time will fulfil any larger part of that Justice which should take place than falls under the life of one man. And this is an evidence which grows with every year of time, which could not be open to the primitive races of mankind, and which, if its weight be found favourable, will develope to the last ages the connecting bonds which unite the fate of many generations, — the plan, of ample outline and intricate parts,

on Emerson, that he would not look on the dark side of the world, on evil, on sin. His attempts to deal with such problems he later considered as among the diseases of childhood.

In "Spiritual Laws" (*Essays*, 1st Series) he said: "The intellectual life may be kept clean and healthful, if a man will live the life of nature, and not import into his mind difficulties which are none of his. No man need be perplexed in his speculations. Let him do and say what strictly belongs to him, and though very ignorant of books, his nature shall not yield him any intellectual obstructions and doubts. Our young people are diseased with the theological problems of original sin, predestination and the like. These never presented a practical difficulty to any man, — never darkened across any man's road who did not go out of his way to seek them. These are the soul's mumps and measles and whooping-cough, and those who have not caught them cannot describe their health or prescribe the cure. A simple mind will not know these enemies."

which will reveal the obscure relations between one and another remote scene, whereby a succession of misfortune and suffering is counterbalanced by an equal sum of happiness, and the unnatural success of vice and its undue preponderance over ages and nations of the world, is set right again by the triumphs of virtue over other ages and nations. Moralists have regarded the adjustment of this great and perplexing variety in human condition as the exhibition to the Universe of a great picture, in which, for the harmony of the whole, much is encompassed with deep shade; and the painted figures may not complain to the Artist because they have been arranged and coloured in such or such a manner. But is this a fair view? are free agents nothing more than painted emblems? are — (but I have left my proper course of thought and must return to it again) — I was about to say that it is history alone which can determine whether the means answer the end, and whether the design be fully accomplished in those schemes whose fulfilments involves many ages; e. g. to discover the typical and direct relations between the Jewish and Christian dispensations; and to watch the fulfilment of prophecy. But whether these schemes be answered or not, the question still recurs —

why did a good Providence permit at all the existence of evil, or why does any one individual suffer from the vice of others, or the sickness and unhappiness which he did not bring on himself, but which is incident to his nature? The reply which each individual finds himself able to make to this question will go far to doubt or to justify his idea of Providence.

It may be well by way of solving this question to propose and answer two more — What is evil? and, What is its origin?

What is evil? There is an answer from every corner of this globe — from every mountain and valley and sea. The enslaved, the sick, the disappointed, the poor, the unfortunate, the dying, the surviving, cry out, It is here. Every man points to his dwelling or strikes his breast to say, It is here. An enumeration of some of the most prominent evils in society will illustrate the variety and malignity of this disease.

What is its origin? The sin which Adam brought into the world and entailed upon his children.

One of the finest chapters in the Old Testament is the song of Deborah and Barak, Judges V. *q. v.* !!

[NOVELS]

The novelist must fasten the skirts of his tale to scenes or traditions so well known as to make it impossible to disbelieve, and so obscure as not to obtrude repugnant facts upon the finished deception he weaves.

[COLLEGE REVISITED]

I have not much cause, I sometimes think, to wish my Alma Mater well, personally; I was not often highly flattered by success, and was every day mortified by my own ill fate or ill conduct. Still, when I went today to the ground where I had had the brightest thoughts of my little life and filled up the little measure of my knowledge, and had felt sentimental for a time, and poetical for a time, and had seen many fine faces, and traversed many fine walks, and enjoyed much pleasant, learned, or friendly society, — I felt a crowd of pleasant thoughts, as I went posting about from place to place, and room to chapel.

February 28, 1822.

Few of my pages have been filled so little to my own satisfaction as these — and why? — because the air has been so fine, and my visits so

pleasant, and myself so full of pleasant social feelings, for a day or two past, that the mind has not possessed sufficiently the cold, frigid tone which is indispensable to become so *oracular* as it hath been of late. *Etsi mearum cogitationum laus (et honor?) non tam magna quam antea fuit, tamen gaudium voluptatemque majorem accipit, quoniam sentire principia amoris me credebam. Vidi amicum etsi veterem, ignotum; alteram vidi notam et noscendam; ambo, forsitan, si placet Deo, partem vitae, partem mei facient. Pœnitet mei res magnas narrare cum verbis qualibus tyro uti solet.*

. . . . . .

At mid day in the crowd of care,
The unbidden thought will come,
And force the obedient blush prepare
Reluctant welcome home;
And in the corners of the heart,
And in the Passions' cell,
It bids my thoughts to battle start,
Which fain would peaceful dwell.
Peace, Pleasure, Pride, and Joy, and Grief,
Awake the chaos wild, —
But worse and cursed the relief
Which sense and strife beguiled. (To-wit,
Indifference.)

So much poetry for peculiar sources of pride, old and inveterate, and perhaps hereafter un-

intelligible. Still one's feelings are well worth speculation and I am desirous of remembering a date. (as that of the last page) . . .

A beautiful thought struck me suddenly, without any connection which I could trace with my previous trains of thought and feeling. It had no analogy to any notion I ever remembered to have formed; it surpassed all others in the energy and purity in which it clothed itself; it put by all others by the novelty it bore, and the grasp it laid upon every fibre; for the time, it absorbed all other thoughts; — all the faculties — each in his cell, bowed down and worshipped before this new Star. — Ye who roam among the living and the dead, over flowers or among the cherubims, in real or ideal universes, do not whisper my thought!

SOCIAL FEELINGS

. . . Solitude has but few sacrifices to make, and may be innocent, but can hardly be greatly virtuous like Abraham, like Job, like the Roman Regulus or the apostle Paul. Great actions, from their nature, are not done in the closet; they are performed in the face of the sun, and in behalf of the world. . . .

Sabbath, *March* 3.

Animi ardor, de quo supra dixi, non extinctus est, sed mihi videtur non esse tam potens, tam clarus, tam magnus quam antea. Timeo ne caderet. Spero ut viveret.

March 4.

VISION

A breathless solitude in a cottage in the woods beneath the magnificent splendour of this moonlight and with this autumnal coolness might drive one mad with excitement. Precipitous and shadowy mountains, thick forests and far winding rivers should sleep under the light, and add their charm to the fascination. The silence broken only by the far cry of the night bird; or disturbed by the distant shout of the peasant, or, at intervals, by those melancholy moanings of the wind which speak so expressively to the ear,—who would not admire? Let the Hours roll by uncounted, let the universe sleep on in this grand repose, but be the spell unbroken by aught of this world, by vulgar and disquieting cares; by a regret or a thought which might remind us of aught but Nature. Here is her Paradise, here is her throne. The stars in their courses roll silently; the oaks rock in their forests to the voice of the sighing breeze; the wall flowers on the top of the cliff nod

over its giddy edge, and the worshipping enthusiast stands at the door of his tent mute and happy, while the leaves rustle down from the topmost boughs and cover his feet. A cry in the wilderness! the shriek and sudden sound of desolation! howl for him that comes riding on darkness through the midnight; that puts his hand forth to darken the moon, and quenches all the stars. Lo! where the awful pageantry rolleth now to the corners of the heaven; the fiery form shrouds his terrible brow behind the fragment of a stormy cloud, and the eyes of Creation gaze after the rushing chariot. Lo! he stands up in the Universe and with his hands he parts the firmament asunder from side to side. And as he trode upon the dragons, I saw the name which burned underneath. Wake, oh wake, ye who keep watch in the Universe! Time, Space, Eternity, ye Energies that live, — for his name is DESTRUCTION! — who keep the *Sceptre* of its eternal order, for He hath reached unto your treasuries, and he feeleth after your sceptre to break it in pieces. Another cry went up, like the crash of broken spheres, the voice of dying worlds. It is night. — An exceeding noisy vision![1]

1 The florid oratory then in vogue, especially of the young Southerners, had, for a time, a great attraction

GREATNESS

Never mistake yourself to be great, or designed for greatness, because you have been visited by an indistinct and shadowy hope that something is reserved for you beyond the common lot. It is easier to aspire than to do the deeds. The very idleness which leaves you leisure to dream of honour is the insurmountable obstacle between you and it. Those who are fitly furnished for the weary passage from mediocrity to greatness seldom find time or appetite to indulge that hungry and boisterous importunity for excitement which weaker intellects are prone to display. That which helps them on to eminence is in itself sufficient to engross the attention of all their powers, and to occupy the aching void. Greatness never comes upon a man by surprise, and without his exertions or consent; No, it is another sort of Genii who traverse your path suddenly; it is *Poverty* which travels like an armed man; it is *Contempt* which meets you in the corners and

for the New England boy. In later years Mr. Emerson used to recite to his children, imitating the manner, some fragments of their college oratory which still remained in his memory.

highways with a hiss, and *Anger* which treads you down as with the lightning. Greatness is a property for which no man gets credit too soon; it must be possessed long before it is acknowledged. Nor do I think this to be so absolutely rare and unattainable as it is commonly esteemed. This very *hope*, and panting after it, which was alluded to, is, in some sort, an earnest of the possibility of success. God doubtless designed to form minds of different mould, and to create distinctions in intellect; still the extraordinary effects of education attest a capacity of improvement to an indefinite degree. . . .

Newton was often at a loss when the conversation turned upon his own discoveries; Shakspeare was indifferent or opposed to the publication of his works, and idly left his books, careless himself, for others, for Britain, or the world to boast of. It is impossible to make arithmetical computation of *mind*. Still this indifference to trifles, and the sensibility to them, trace a very broad line of distinction between the first and second orders. . . .

I am not sure but that the highest order of greatness, that which abandons earthly consanguinity, and allies itself to immortal minds, is

that which exists in obscurity and is least known among mankind. For superiour intellects are only drawn out into society by the action of those inducements which society holds up to them. If, therefore, there are any who are above the solicitation of wealth, honour, and influence, and who can laugh even at the love of Fame, that last infirmity of noble minds, there will be nothing left worth offering them, to attract them from their solitudes; they must pass on through their discipline and education of life, unsympathized with, unknown, or perhaps, ignorantly despised. Thus the archangels pass among us unseen, for, if known, they could not be appreciated, and having faculties and energies which our organs can never measure, it is better that we never meet.

March 7.

BALLAD

The Knight rode up to the castle-gate,
But a grisly hag was there,
She chattered in spite, with muttered threat,
And twisted her thin gray hair.

Her half-bald pate was a sorry sight,
But her eyes went wide askew;
Two long dog-teeth, like dim twilight,
Shone over her lips so blue.

"Fair ladye of love!" the Knight exclaimed,
And bent his body low,
"Thou flower of beauty, widely famed,
Roses feed thee, I trow.

"The boy Cupide attendeth thee,
The Graces thy sisters be;
Oh give me a lock of thy golden hair
And make a faithful knight of me."

The maiden clenched her shrivelled fist,
And her eyes grew red with rage: —
"You may mock, Sir Simple, as loud as you list,
But you *shall be* my (chosen) page.

"I'll give you a lock of the hair that's left,
Three hairs I'll give to thee;
Beëlzebub knows, when I'm bereft,
I will the stronger be."

She plucked three hairs from her pye-bald head,
And shrieked like a fishhorn loud, —
Straight of those hairs three snakes were made,
That leaped on the champion good;

And one twined round his armed neck,
And one twined round each hand,
And the tails of the three in a black braid met
In the grisly haggis hand.

And the hag she turned to a dragon green,
With these she flew away,—
And never again those two were seen,
Until the Judgement Day.

This book, in ordinary, is peculiarly devoted to original ideas, but I cannot resist the pleasure of setting down, in black and white, verses which I have repeated so often. It is a charm in one of Ben Jonson's Masques.

"The faery beam upon you,
The stars to glister on you,
A moon of light,
In the noon of night,
Till the fire-drake hath oer-gone you.
The wheel of Fortune guide you,
The Boy with the bow beside you
Run aye in the way,
Till the bird of day,
And the luckier lot betide you."

SOCIAL FEELINGS

. . . It is in itself a most noble and magnificent subject, and one to which all others seem tributary, . . . how the combined energies of many millions of co-existent agents may be brought to act, with their proper infinite influence, continually in the direction of their sure

interests, for time and eternity; and how the improvement which is gained may be kept, and the separate and conflicting energies may be reconciled, and, that Mind shall reap all the fruits of the toiling of the body. . . .

[DEATH]

March 8.

. . . Life is the spark which kindles up a soul and opens its capacities to receive the great lessons which it is appointed to learn of the Universe—of Good—of Evil—of accountability—of Eternity; of Beauty, of Happiness. The inestimable moment in which the history of past ages is opened, its own relations to the Universe explained, its dependence and independence shewn; the time to reach itself the affections, and to gratify them, to ally itself in kindly bonds with other beings of like destiny; the time to educate a citizen of unknown spheres; the time to serve the Lord.

And is it good to die? to exchange this precious consciousness capable of such sublime purposes for an unknown state (of which all that is seen is appalling); perhaps for a gloomy sleep? Is it good to be forced away against our will and through extreme suffering, from the vital body,

and give up that organ of our enjoyment and sufferings to the worms, while what shall befall the soul we cannot tell? We shudder when the question is made, and terror, terror breaks down the vain refinements of philosophy, and the fences of affectation.

Reason bids us ask, who is the being that forces away the mind into this unknown state? Nature and Revelation have taught us something of this being. We are reduced to put our views of death entirely upon His character and will, and Death will become more or less terrible according to our notions of the Lord of Death.

Thus have I fulfilled enough of my design in this book to authorize my dedication on the first page. This shall not prevent me from resuming the topics upon the slightest indications of my Noömeter.

DRAMA

March 9.

In connexion with the remarks on the Drama [*Wide World*, *No.* 3] it should be further said, that this art is the most attractive, naturally, of all. The others speak to man from a distance, through cold and remote associations. The liter-

ature of a generation generally addresses but a scanty portion of society; of their contemporaries, history and poetry are confined to a few readers; philosophy and science to still fewer; but the buskined muse comes out impatient from these abstractions, to repeat in a popular and intelligible form the productions of the closet, to copy the manners of high and low life, to act upon the heart; and succeeds, by thus avoiding the haughty port of the Parnassian queens, to draw the multitude by the cords of love. Folly wins where wisdom fails; and the policy of adding to our attractions even at the cost of some wit, is seldom repented. This is the excellence of the drama which pretends to nothing more than to be a true picture of life.

FICTION

The origin of Fiction is buried in the darkness of the remotest ages. If it were a question of any importance, perhaps its secret springs are not yet beyond the reach of the inquirer. To paint what is not should naturally seem less agreeable to the mind than to describe what is. "Nothing" (said the author of the Essay on the Human Understanding) "is so beautiful to the eye, as truth to the mind." But if we look again,

I apprehend we shall find that the source of fable, is *human misery;* that to relieve one hour of life, by exciting the sympathies to a tale even of imaginary joy, was accounted a praiseworthy accomplishment; and honour and gold were due to him, whose rare talent took away, for the moment, the memory of care and grief. Fancy, which is ever a kind of contradiction to life and truth, set off in a path remote as possible from all human scenes and circumstances; and hence the first legends dealt altogether in monstrous scenes, and peopled the old mythology, and the nursery lore, with magicians, griffins, and metamorphoses which offend the ear of taste, and could only win away the credulity of a savage race, and the simplicity of a child. Reason, however, soon taught the bard that the deception was infinitely improved by being reduced within the compass of probability; and the second fictions introduced imaginary persons into the manners and dwellings of real life.

PROPHECY

March 10.

No talent is more prized, in society, than that sagacity which, from passing events draws just and profound conclusions regarding their future ter-

mination. The names of Burke, Fox and Pitt deservedly rank high in the world's esteem from the success of their political predictions. For it argues a singular elevation of mind to generalize so calmly in the conflicting interests and partialities of fortune, to see something inevitable in the almost fortuitous concurrence of affairs, to cast a die into the whirl of events, and rest in confidence of its return. This, however, is but a faint approach to the majesty of that remarkable foresight which was exhibited in the early ages of the world, and termed Prophecy. For the one is of inferior origin, and depends altogether upon a shrewd comparison of present with past events, and a critical attention to the bias and results of a form of government, of a national character, of a popular excitement. The other grasps at indications which are invisible to other eyes, and possesses a new faculty of communication with the universe. It does not follow the general progress of things to a general result, but singles out, with admirable distinctness, the one man or event, for which its lips were opened; and, entirely destitute of any manifest clue to its knowledge, describes, with a precision not to be mistaken, the character, circumstances and use of things which are buried in a futurity of many ages. It sensibly

elevates our notions of the human mind, to discover in it this latent capacity of reaching through the accidents of time, to ascertain a destiny beyond the possibility of cross accidents to change. It is a capacity which every soul looks to enjoy hereafter, and its development here is a signal distinction from the hand of Providence, and an earnest to the soul of an unclouded vision to come. . . .

[Wide World, No. 5, is missing from the Journals.]

JOURNAL VII

THE WIDE WORLD, NO. 6

"*Maximus partus temporis*," quoth giggling Vanity. "Burn the trash," saith Fear.

There the Northern light reposes
With ruddy flames in circles bright
Like a wreath of ruby roses
On the dusky brow of night.

DEDICATION

BOSTON, *April* 14, 1822.

In aforetime, while to the inhabitants of Europe the existence of America was yet a secret in the heart of time, there dwelled a giant upon the South Mountain Chimborazo, who extended a beneficent dominion over hills and clouds and continents, and sustained a communication with his mother Nature. He lived two hundred years in that rich land, causing peace and justice, and he battled with the Mammoths and slew them. Upon the summit of the mountain, amid the snows of all the winters, was the mouth of a cave which was lined with golden ore. This cavity, termed "The Golden Lips,"

admitted downwards into the centre of the mountain, which was a vast and spacious temple, and all its walls and ceilings glowing with pure gold. Man had never polluted it with his tools of art. Nature fashioned the mighty tenement for the bower of her son. At midday, the vertical sun was perpendicular to the cavity, and poured its full effulgence upon the mirror floor; its reflected beams blazed on all sides, from the fretted roof, with a lustre which eclipsed the elder glory of the temple of Solomon. In the centre of this gorgeous palace, bareheaded and alone, the Giant Califo performed the incommunicable rite, and studied the lines of destiny. When the sun arrived at the meridian, a line of light traced this inscription upon the wall: — "A thousand years, a thousand years, and the Hand shall come, and shall tear the Veil for all." Two thousand years have passed, and the mighty progress of improvement and civilization have been forming the force which shall reveal Nature to Man. To roll about the outskirts of this Mystery and ascertain and describe its pleasing wonders — be this the journey of my Wideworld. The *Hand* shall come; — I traced its outline in the mists of the morning.

VAIN WORLD

Tuesday Evening, *April* 16.

It is strange that a world should be so dear which speculatively and seriously we acknowledge to be so unsatisfying and so dark. Not all its most glorious array when Nature is apparelled in her best, and when Art toils to gratify, —not the bright sun itself, and the blazing firmament wherein he stands as chief—can prevent a man, at certain moments, from saying to his soul—"It is vanity." No wild guesses, no elaborate reasoning can surmount this testimony to the familiar truth, that the human spirit hath a higher origin than matter, a higher home than the earth; that it is too capacious to be always cheated with trifles, and too long-lived to amalgamate with mortality. . . .

It was found by philosophy that luminous matter wastes itself ever; it is true without a metaphor of this shining world which goes on decaying, and still attracting by its false lustre.

[POPULACE]

It is a matter of great doubt to me whether or not the *populace* of all ages is essentially the same in character. I am not a competent judge

to decide if inconsistent institutions will affect and alter the prominent features of the moral character. There can be no question that from both the poles to the Equator, under every sun, man will be found *selfish* and comparatively indifferent to the general welfare, whenever it is put in competition with private interest. But in China, as in Venice, will faction and cabal always watch to check the continuance of every administration, good or bad? Will vulgar blood always rebel and rail, and against honourable, virtuous and opulent members of the same society? Will the good always be in peril from the misdeeds and menaces of the bad? In the answer to these interrogations, truth leads reluctantly towards the affirmative. This is certain—that war is waged in the Universe, without truce or end, between Virtue and Vice; they are Light and Darkness, they cannot harmonize. Upon Earth they are forcibly consorted, and the perpetual struggle which they make, separates by a distinct line man from man throughout the world.

MARTYRDOM

Saturday Evening. *April.*

I rejoice in the full and unquestionable testimony which certifies the sufferings of Martyrs, as the most undeniable merit of the human race; it proves the existence of a consistency and force of character which might else to common minds appear chimerical. . . . In those moments when a desperate view of the wrong side of society will sometimes totally unsettle our convictions, and reason almost leans to doubt and Atheism, because the world is frail or mad, this saving recollection comes up like an angel of light to assure us that men have suffered the fierceness of the torture, have endured, and died for the faith. . . . To keep inviolate the divine law, they have broken over the law of nature and the native fears of man and have dared to immolate this mysterious existence and to try the gulfs of futurity. . . .

HABIT

Habit is a thing of compound character which forges chains for human nature at the same time that it announces its consistency and independence. It is a thorough and perfect servitude, but

man voluntarily imposed it upon himself. It is a noble foresight which at once determines upon actions that will be perpetually proper, and makes one resolution answer for a thousand, and once made, binds with divine force. When we consider it as an *instrument*—put into the hands of Vice and Virtue, which both may wield to certain, to vast advantage, we shall have an adequate idea of its importance in the constitution of human life. In childhood it is given into the power of all to make choice between Virtue and Vice, to whom he will commit the service of this Magic Wand.

. . . . . .

Each movement of the Archangel is perhaps free and independent of every former one.

Tuesday Evening. *May* 7.

Amid my diseases and aches and qualms I will write to see if my brains are gone. For a day or two past we have had a wind precisely *annual;* which I discovered by *this*, that I have a return of the identical thoughts and temperament which I had a year ago. But this sun shines upon, and these ill winds blow over a changed person in condition, in hope. I was then delighted with my recent honours, traversing my chamber (Hollis

9) flushed and proud of a poet's fancies, and the day when they were to be exhibited; pleased with ambitious prospects, and careless because ignorant of the future. But now I am a hopeless Schoolmaster, just entering upon years of trade to which no distinct limit is placed; toiling through this miserable employment even without the poor satisfaction of discharging it well, for the good suspect me, and the geese dislike me. Then again look at this: there was pride in being a collegian, and a poet, and somewhat romantic in my queer acquaintance with ——, and poverty presented nothing mortifying in the meeting of two young men whom their common relation and character as scholars equalized; But when one becomes a droning schoolmaster, and the other is advancing his footing in good company and fashionable friends, the cast of countenance on meeting is somewhat altered. Hope, it is true, still hangs out, though at further distance, her gay banners; but I have found her a cheat once, twice, many times, and shall I trust the deceiver again? And what am I the better for two, four, six years delay? Nine months are gone, and except some rags of Wideworlds, half a dozen general notions, etc., I am precisely the same World's humble servant that left the University in August. Good people

SKETCHES BY EMERSON

In the leaves of his College Journals

will tell me that it is a Judgment and lesson for my character, to make me fitter for the office whereto I aspire; but if I come out a dispirited, mature, broken-hearted miscreant,—how will man or myself be bettered? Now I have not thought, all this time, that I was complaining at Fate, although I suppose it amounts to the same; these are the suggestions only of a disappointed spirit brooding over the fall of castles in the air. My fate is enviable contrasted with that of others; I have only to blame myself who had no right to build them. WALDO E.

"And there is a great difference whether the tortoise gathers herself within her shell hurt or unhurt."

I shall bless Cadmus, or Chad, or Hermes, for inventing letters and written language—you, my dear little Wideworld, deducing your pedigree from that pretty event.

May 13.

In twelve days I shall be nineteen years old; which I count a miserable thing. Has any other educated person lived so many years and lost so many days? I do not say acquired so little, for by an ease of thought and certain looseness of

mind I have perhaps been the subject of as many ideas as many of mine age. But mine approaching maturity is attended with a goading sense of emptiness and wasted capacity; with the conviction that vanity has been content to admire the little circle of natural accomplishments, and has travelled again and again the narrow round, instead of adding sedulously the gems of knowledge to their number. Too tired and too indolent to travel up the mountain path which leads to good learning, to wisdom and to fame, I must be satisfied with beholding with an envious eye the labourious journey and final success of my fellows, remaining stationary myself, until my inferiors and juniors have reached and outgone me. And how long is this to last? How long shall I hold the little acclivity which four or six years ago I flattered myself was enviable, but which has become contemptible now? It is a child's place, and if I hold it longer, I may quite as well resume the bauble and rattle, grow old with a baby's red jockey on my grey head and a picture-book in my hand, instead of Plato and Newton. Well, and I am he who nourished brilliant visions of future grandeur which may well appear presumptuous and foolish now. My infant imagination was idolatrous of glory, and thought

itself no mean pretender to the honours of those who stood highest in the community, and dared even to contend for fame with those who are hallowed by time and the approbation of ages. It was a little merit to conceive such animating hopes, and afforded some poor prospect of the possibility of their fulfilment. This hope was fed and fanned by the occasional lofty communications which were vouchsafed to me with the Muses' Heaven, and which have at intervals made me the organ of remarkable sentiments and feelings which were far above my ordinary train. And with this lingering earnest of better hope (I refer to this fine exhilaration which now and then quickens my clay) shall I resign every aspiration to belong to that family of giant minds which live on earth many ages and rule the world when their bones are slumbering, no matter whether under a pyramid or a primrose? No, I will yet a little while entertain the angel.

Look next from the history of my intellect to the history of my heart. A blank, my lord. I have not the kind affections of a pigeon. Ungenerous and selfish, cautious and cold, I yet wish to be romantic; have not sufficient feeling to speak a natural, hearty welcome to a friend or stranger, and yet send abroad wishes and fancies of a friend-

ship with a man I never knew. There is not in the whole wide Universe of God (my relations to Himself I do not understand) one being to whom I am attached with warm and entire devotion, — not a being to whom I have joined fate for weal or wo, not one whose interests I have nearly and dearly at heart; — and this I say at the most susceptible age of man. Perhaps at the distance of a score of years, if I then inhabit this world, or still more, if I do not, these will appear frightful confessions; they may or may not, — it is a true picture of a barren and desolate soul.[1]

(Be it remembered that it was last evening that I heard that prodigious display of eloquence in Faneuil Hall, by Mr Otis, which astonished and delighted me above any thing of the kind I ever witnessed.)

I love my Wide Worlds.

My body weighs 144 pounds. — In a fortnight I intend, *Deo volente*, to make a journey on foot.

1 These utterances are not to be taken too seriously. The boy's ascetic life and close confinement at his necessary and his self-imposed work have wrought their natural result. These are the first symptoms of the general vital depression which, in the next five years, nearly cost him his life. For his mother and brothers he always had a strong affection and loyalty.

A month hence I will answer the question whether the pleasure was only in the *hope*.

MARATHON

Go hide the shields of war,
The clarion and the spear,
The plume of pride and scimetar,
Vain trophies of a bier.
They have digged a thousand graves
In Marathon today;
Their dirge is sounded by the waves
Which wash the slain away.
The hearth is forsaken, the Furies are fed, —
Wake, Maidens of Athens! your wail for the dead.

The Persian's golden car,
And image of the Sun
In flashing light rolled fast and far
O'er echoing Marathon.
He mourns his quenchèd beam,
His slain and broken host,
He curses glory's dream
Which lured him to be lost.
His rose-wreath is dyed with a bloody stain
And the Genius of Asia shrieks Shame! to the slain.

Io! Minerva! Hail!
What Argive Harp is dumb?
The triumph loads the gale,
The laurelled victors come!

There 's a light in Victory's eye
Which none but God can give;
And a name can never die —
Apollo bids it live.
The daughters of Music have learned your name,
And Athens, and Earth, shall reëcho your fame.

May 24, 1822.

And now it is Friday at even, and I am come to take leave of my pleasant Wideworld, for a little time, and commence my journey tomorrow. I look to many pleasures in my fortnight's absence, but neither is my temperament so volatile and gay, nor my zeal so strong as to make my expectations set aside the possibility of disappointment. I am so young an adventurer, that I am alive to regret and sentiment upon so little an occasion as this parting; though one would judge from my late whispered execrations of the school that a short suspension of its mortifications would be exceedingly delightful. I may also observe here that I had never suspected myself of so much feeling as rose within me at taking leave of Mrs. E. at the water side and seeing so delicate a lady getting into a boat from those steep wharf-stairs among sailors and labourers; and leaving her native shore for Louisiana with-

out a single friend or relation attending her to the shore, and seeing her depart.—For myself I was introduced to her upon the wharf. Her husband behaved very well. God speed them![1]

Mem. Certain lines in *Anthony and Cleopatra* about a "hoop of affection so staunch," etc.; find it.[2] How noble a masterpiece is the tragedy of Hamlet: it can only be spoken of and described by superlatives. There is a deep and subtle wit, with an infinite variety, and every line is golden.

Sunday Evening, *June* 9.[3]

If a man could go into the country but once, as to some raree-shew, or if it were indulged by God but to a single individual to behold the

1 R. W. E.'s (later) note. She is dead and her husband also, a thousand miles away from their kindred.

2 "If I did know
A hoop to hold us staunch, from edge to edge
O' the world I 'd seek it."
Anthony and Cleopatra.

3 Some account of this walking journey of Ralph and William is given by the former in a letter to his Aunt Mary Emerson, printed by Mr. Cabot in the Memoir (vol. I, pages 78–79). They walked to Northborough, found a pretty farm-house, where they were received as boarders for a week. This was near Little Chauncey Pond, which they crossed in a boat and betook themselves to great woods beyond. They enjoyed

majesty of nature, I think the credit and magnificence of Art would fall suddenly to the ground. For take away the cheapness and ease of acquisition which lessen our estimation of its value, and who could suddenly find himself alone in the green fields where the whole firmament meets the eye at once, and the pomp of woods and clouds and hills is poured upon the mind — without an unearthly animation? Upon a mountain solitude a man instantly feels a sensible exaltation and a better claim to his rights in the universe. He who wanders in the woods perceives how natural it was to pagan imagination to find gods in every deep grove and by each fountain head. Nature seems to him not to be silent but to be eager and striving to break out into music. Each tree, flower and stone, he invests with life and character; and it is impossible that the wind which breathes so expressive a sound amid the leaves — should mean nothing. . . . The embowered cottage and solitary farmhouse display to you the same mingled picture of frankness and meanness, pride and poverty of feeling, fraud and charity, which are encom-

themselves highly, did little reading or writing, but found rest and "an exhilarating Paradise air" which was much better for them.

passed with brick walls in the city. Every pleasant feature is balanced by somewhat painful. To the stranger, the simplicity of manners is delightful and carries the memory back to the Arcadian reign of Saturn; and the primitive custom of saluting every passenger is an agreeable acknowledgement of common sympathies, and a common nature.[1] But from the want of an upper class in society, from the admirable republican equality which levels one with all, results a rudeness and sometimes a savageness of manners which is apt to disgust a polished and courtly man.

DRAMA[2]

June 10.

There are two natures in man, — flesh and spirit, — whose tendencies are wide as the universe asunder, and from whose miraculous combination it arises that he is urged alway by the

1 Mr. Emerson kept up this kindly custom in his walks on country-roads through his life.

2 This is the latter part of an attack on the Drama for its depraving quality (everywhere a moral poison disguised and sweetened by art) ending with a conventional picturing of the soul at the Judgment Day confounded by the record of misspent time. Then, as in the earlier passages on the same subject, Emerson abruptly turns to praise the theory of the Drama and its possibilities for good, if reformed.

visible eloquent image of Truth, toward immortal perfection, and allured aside from the painful pursuit by gross but fascinating pleasure. The worst form under which temptation entices our weakness, is when it plots to make the soul a pander to the sense, by winning the mind to the pleasures of lofty sentiment and sublime fiction, and insinuating amid this parade of moral beauty its pernicious incentives to crime, and invitations to folly. It is a fatal twilight, in which darkness is sown with light, until the perverted judgment learns to think that the whole spectacle is more harmonious, and better accommodated to his feeble human sense. But be assured, the light shall grow less and less, and shade shall be added to shade. . . .

The Platonist . . . did not widely err who proclaimed the existence of two warring principles, the incorruptible mind, and the mass of malignant matter. This was a creed which was often damned as heresy by the infallible church; happy if they had never devised a worse. In their attempts to escape from this inherent corruption, and correct the imperfection of nature, they went wrong with delirious zeal; but eternal truth founded the basis of their belief. . . .

The theory of the drama is, in itself, so beauti-

ful, and so well designed to work good, that we feel forcibly what a pity it is, that its concentrating interest, its unequalled power of conveying instruction and the delight inspired by its ordinary decorations should be so miserably perverted to the service of sin. It might aid Virtue, and lend its skilful powers to the adornment of truth; its first form was a hymn to the gods, and a monitory voice to human frailty, and human passion. Now, it seduces to Pleasure and leads on to Death, and the shadows of Eternity settle over its termination.

I think it is pretty well known that more is gained to a man's business by one half hour's conversation with his friend, than by very many letters; for, face to face, each can distinctly state his own views; and each chief objection is started and answered; and, moreover, a more definite notion of one's sentiments and intentions, with regard to the matter, are gathered from his look and tones, than it is possible to gain from paper. It is therefore a hint borrowed from Nature, when a lesson of morals is conveyed to an audience in the engaging form of a dialogue, instead of the silence of a book, or the cold soliloquy of an orator. When this didactic dialogue is improved by the addition of

pathetic or romantic circumstances, and, in the place of indifferent speakers, we are presented with the characters of great and good men, of heroes and demigods, thus adding to the sentiments expressed the vast weight of virtuous life and character — the wit of the invention is doubled. Lastly, a general moral is drawn from an event where all the parts of the piece are made to tend and terminate; this is what is called the distribution of poetical justice, and is nothing but an inevitable inference of some great moral truth, which the mind readily makes, upon the turn of affairs. For greater delight, we add music, painting and poetry, well aware that the splendour of embellishment will fix the eye, after the mind grows weary. These are the advantages comprehended in the dramatic art. Truths otherwise impertinent, are told with admirable effect in this little epitome of life; and every philosophic Christian must be loth to lose to religion, an instrument of such tried powers.

GOD [1]

. . . Simonides said well, "Give me twice the time, for the more I think, the more it enlarges"; and it is only mathematical truth; for

1 Extracts from a long passage on this theme.

when the subject is infinite, it must be, that, in proportion as discipline enlarges the capacity of the powers to comprehend a portion of the line, so much the more of the line will be continually discerned, extending above and beyond the straining orbs of imagination. It is, nevertheless, apparent in the munificent endowment of the human intellect, that provision has been made to enable it to proceed to some distinct knowledge of this Being whom in darkness we adore. Witness some of those admirable demonstrations of the *existence and attributes* which various minds in various ages have fallen upon, and which we record as the best monuments of human wit. And I regard this rather as a glimpse and earnest of the light which shall break upon the soul when its cumbering flesh bond is broken, — of the glory that shall be revealed — than as any solitary or fortuitous discovery which may stand unconnected with the past or the future. For is it not natural to believe that — out of earth, and men of clay — the Deity is the great engrossing theme which absorbs the wonder as well as the devotion of the disembodied spirits that people his creation? And is it not to be presumed that the soul will be furnished with some under-

standing of his strength when she enters on the scene where his divinity is displayed? The lisping infant, on earth, stammers the name of God; and shall the Archangel, whose gigantic intelligence displays the education of heaven, stand silent beneath the very Cloud? Mankind have naturally conceived the joy of that spiritual estate to consist in the satisfaction and delight of certain high intellectual exercises, of which our best and loftiest contemplations afford some faint symbol. And this notion is natural and consistent with their condition; for they have left the obstruction of a material universe, and dwell now in the majesty of thought, in a grand inconceivable dependence of mind upon the great Source of intelligence, and are therefore in a situation to pursue those inquiries which mocked the researches of finite beings, but which invite the study of those to whom the sources of wisdom, and the riches of the unseen state are laid open. In this state and with these opportunities, a little meditation will make it plain, that there can be, in heaven or earth, no thought which can so concentrate and absorb the living spirit as the idea of God.

. . . . . .

What will divert our attention, and attach our

affections in the long, long Day wherein the faculties shall enjoy an eternal exercise? Perhaps in the communion of departed wisdom and virtue; in the society of Socrates, Plato, and St. Paul. Be it so; it is a rational and authorized hope. We respect and admire the life and character of these eminent individuals; they appeared to possess an intimate familiarity with the profoundest principles of philosophy, and at the same time a power to express them with the most perfect simplicity in their conversation and in their books. It is natural to look to these great masters of mankind as qualified in another state to give us our introduction to its mysteries and joys.

But consider a moment, if a celestial spirit could be so besotted as to prefer the little flights of a spirit which is its peer, to the inconceivable intellect which kindles all and overwhelms all. Let it compare for a moment the history of the two Beings. One lived upon earth its span, and was then swallowed into the multitude of men, leaving no trace of its existence, except, perhaps, a little book, or its name, or its monument. But if your mind be strung to an elevated tone, try to comprehend the history of the Other;—A stream without a source, an age without an infancy,—the mind resorts in vain to its highest

antiquity to seek the commencement of the Ancient of Days. It can only pursue a few days of his history in the immensity of his works. In a few days he built the world and the firmament, and in the darkness of the Universe he lit the sun; he created man and beast; he arranged the seasons and provided for the preservation of the Order established; he arched the rainbow and gathered the clouds, the granaries of his hail, of the lightning and thunder. That immeasurable existence upon such an insignificant portion of which the eye of all mankind rests with wonder — we conceive to have been spent in similar employment throughout his infinite kingdom; and that Being is well worthy of prostrate adoration to whom we ascribe an eternity, every moment of which hath been signalized by a scheme of preserving providence, by a plan of redemption, by the informing of angelic intellect, or by the creation of a world. One chief reason why the human soul is so prone to neglect or avoid this idea, is because it is so unsatisfactory, being almost entirely above the attainment of our weak powers; but, in the upper state, when this weakness is removed, and our faculties are taught to soar up to the very Throne — I need not ask if the mind could be so blind as to admire the

spark, in the presence of that fire whence it came.

Sunday Morn.

On such employments we anticipate the happiness of heaven to depend. That any approximation to such spiritual elevation can be made on earth, will be believed by some and denied by others. The reasons why we are no more strongly attracted, are plainly seen, and are lodged within ourselves. [For] the mind does not yet exist but in an infant state, and waits for a development in another world. But there have been men at various intervals, in the world, who by some remarkable fortune, or remarkable effort, have rendered themselves less liable to the suggestions of sense, and have, in a manner, departed from the pursuits and habits of men to hold strict conversation with the attributes of Deity, and, in the emphatic language of the Hebrew historian, *to walk with God*. And there are certain facilities for this enlarged communion which sometimes occur, to give direction and aid to the feebleness of nature. The astronomer who, by reason of the littleness of the earth, would be able to learn next to nothing of the distance and magnitudes of the heavenly bodies, can yet take advantage of its revolutions around the Sun, and thus move his instruments

about in the universe, across the vast orbit of his planet; so the lapse of ages may sometimes enable the devout philosopher to trace the design of Providence, otherwise above his comprehension, by reducing to a miniature view, a magnificent course of events.

. . . . . .

The Being which we adore must of necessity be adorable. Where gat we the idea — so different from our other ideas — of somewhat so transcendant and sublime? . . . The only answer which we are compelled to receive is that the Intelligence who formed our minds adjusted them in such manner as to admit suitable notions of himself from the exhibition of his works, or from the consciousness of our own existence. What must be that existence to which every star, every leaf, every drop in the creation testifies, by their strange and unaccountable formation! Towards that object the eyes of all generations have successively turned, by an universal instinctive impulse; and we are actuated by a portion of the same inspiration when we pronounce the great name of God. And when the mute creation with irresistable force points our inquiries to Him, it becomes a truly admirable spectacle to behold this wise sympathy throughout nature,

of imperfect beings consenting to adore perfection.

Si ulla fuit genitalis origo
Terrarum et coeli, semperque aeterna fuere,
Cur supra bellum Thebanum, et funera Trojae,
Non alias alii quoque res cecinere poetae?

LUCRETIUS.

I know nothing more fit to conclude the remarks which have been made in the last pages than certain fine pagan strains.

. . . "Of dew-bespangled leaves and blossoms bright
Hence! vanish from my sight,
Delusive pictures! unsubstantial shews!
My soul absorbed, one only Being knows,
Of all perceptions, one abundant source,
Hence every object, every moment flows,
Suns hence derive their force,
Hence planets learn their course;
But suns and fading worlds I view no more,
God only I perceive, God only I adore!"

[NARAYENA; *Sir William Jones's translation.*]

DIFFERING RANK OF NATIONS

July 6.

What imparted that impulse to Greece which may be said to have created literature, which has been communicated through Rome to the world?

It is a curious spectacle to a contemplative man to observe a little population of twelve or twenty thousand men for a couple of generations setting their minds at work more diligently than men were accustomed, and effecting something altogether new and strange; to see them lie quietly down again in darkness, while all the nations of the world rise up to do them a vain reverence; and all the wisest among them exhausting their powers to make a faint imitation of some one excellence of Greece in her age of glory; to see this admiration continued and augmented as the world grows older, and with all the advantages of an experience of 6000 years to find those departed artists never paralleled. It certainly is the most manly literature in the world, being composed of histories, orations, poems, and dramatic pieces, in which no sign of accommodation is discovered to the whims of fashion or patronage. Simplicity is a remarkable characteristic of the productions of all the ancient masters. Upon their most admirable statue they were content to engrave, "Apollodorus the Ephesian made it"; and we respect the republican brevity which, in the place of a studied eulogium upon a drama which had been represented with unbounded applause, simply wrote, "Placuit" (it pleased).

LICOÖ

"Let us plait the garland and weave the chi,
While the wild waves dash on our iron strand;
Tomorrow, these waves may wash our graves,
And the moon look down on a ruined land."[1]

The islanders who sung this melancholy song, presaging the evil fates which waited for them —have passed away. No girdled chieftain sits upon their grim rocks to watch the dance of his tribe beneath the yellow lustre of the Moon; the moan of the waves is the only voice in their silent-land; the moan of the waves is the only requiem of the brave who are buried on the sea-shore or in the main. But their memory has not failed from among men; the mournful notes which foreboded their fall have given it immortality. For there is a charm in poetry, which binds the world, and finds its effect in the East and in the West.

"Let me not, like a worm, go by the way."
CHAUCER.

1 This poem, in which Mr. Emerson took delight in his youth, and often referred to, is printed in his *Parnassus* under the title "Song of the Tonga Islanders"; author unknown.

JOURNAL VIII

THE WIDE WORLD, NO. 7

Ζήτω γὰρ τὴν ἀλήθειαν, ὑφ' ἧς οὐδεὶς πώποτε ἐβλάβη.
MARCUS ANTONINUS.

DEDICATION

BOSTON, *July* 11, 1822.

I dedicate my book to the Spirit of America. I dedicate it to that living soul, which doth exist somewhere beyond the Fancy, to whom the Divinity hath assigned the care of this bright corner of the Universe. I bring my little offering, in this month, which covers the continent with matchless beauty, to the shrine, which distant generations shall load with sacrifice, and distant ages shall admire afar off. With a spark of prophetic devotion, I hasten to hail the Genius, who yet counts the tardy years of childhood, but who is increasing unawares in the twilight, and swelling into strength, until the hour when he shall break the cloud, to shew his colossal youth, and cover the firmament with the shadow of his wings.

Evening.

It is a slow patriotism which forgets to love till all the world have set the example. If the nations of Europe can find anything to idolize in their ruinous and enslaved institutions, we are content, though we are astonished at their satisfaction. But let them not ignorantly mock at the pride of an American, as if it were misplaced or unfounded, when that freeman is giving an imperfect expression to his sense of his condition. He rejoices in the birthright of a country where the freedom of opinion and action is so perfect that every man enjoys exactly that consideration to which he is entitled, and each mind, as in the bosom of a family, institutes and settles a comparison of its powers with those of its fellow, and quietly takes that stand which nature intended for it. He points to his native land as the only one where freedom has not degenerated to licentiousness; in whose well-ordered districts education and intelligence dwell with good morals; whose rich estates peacefully descend from sire to son, without the shadow of an interference from private violence, or public tyranny; whose offices of trust and seats of science are filled by minds of republican strength and elegant accomplish-

ments.[1] Xenophon and Thucydides would have thought it a theme better worthy of their powers, than Persia or Greece; and her Revolution would furnish Plutarch with a list of heroes. If the Constitution of the United States outlives a century, it will be matter of deep congratulation to the human race; for the Utopian dreams which visionaries have pursued and sages exploded, will find their beautiful theories rivalled and outdone by the reality, which it has pleased God to bestow upon United America.

Saturday Evening, *July* 13.

(Continued from Wide World, No. 6)

I have proposed to attempt the consideration of those different aspects, under which we are accustomed to view the Divinity. I shall endeavour first to give some account of his relation to us as the founder of the Moral law.

It is not necessary to describe that law, otherwise than by saying that it is the sovereign necessity which commands every mind to abide by one mode of conduct and to reject another,

1 Such an one died yesterday. Professor Frisbie will hardly be supplied by any man in the community. [Levi Frisbie, Alford Professor of Natural Religion, Moral Philosophy and Civil Polity.] (R. W. E.)

by joining to the one a perfect satisfaction, while it pursues the other with indefinite apprehensions.

Its divine origin is fully shown by its superiority to all the other principles of our nature. It seems to be more essential to our constitution than any other feeling whatever. It dwells so deeply in the human nature that we feel it to be implied in consciousness. Other faculties fail, —Memory sleeps; Judgment is impaired or ruined; Imagination droops, —but the moral sense abides there still. In our very dreams, it wakes and judges amid the Chaos of the rest. The depths of its foundations in the heart, and the subtilty of its nature in eluding investigations into its causes and character, distinguish it eminently above other principles. If you compare it, for example, with the phenomena of taste, which also appear to be universal, we shall readily discern a considerable distinction withdrawing from the one its transient resemblance. The judgment which determines a circle to be more beautiful than a square, or a rose to be fairer than a clod, is not founded upon aught existing in the mind independent of the senses, but is manifestly derived from the humble sources of the material world. It is nothing but a power

to decide upon the pleasures of sense. If this be not the limit of the province of taste, if it ever rise to the judgment of questions which seem to involve moral beauty, it is only where it begins to blend with the moral sense and becomes ennobled by its connection. But that sovereign sense whereof we speak leaves the material world and its subordinate knowledge to subordinate faculties, and marshals before its divine tribunal the motives of action, the secrets of character and the interests of the universe. It has no taint of mortality in the purity and unity of its intelligence; it is perfectly spiritual. It sometimes seems to sanction that Platonic dream, that the soul of the individual was but an emanation from the Abyss of Deity, and about to return whence it flowed. So it seems to predict, on SUPREME AUTHORITY, that fate which is to be declared, when Time shall cease. It seems to be the only human thought which is admitted to partake of the counsels of the eternal world, and to give note already to man, of the event and the sentence to which he is doomed. . . .

GOD

We have one remarkable evidence to the character, from eternity, of that Being, in the di-

vine determination to make man *in the image of God*. In all the insignificance and imperfection of our nature, in the guilt to which we are liable, and the calamity which guilt has accumulated,—man triumphs to remember that he bears about him a spark which all beings venerate [and] acknowledge to be the emblem of God,—which may be violated, but which cannot be extinguished. And we remark with delight the confirmations of this belief in the opening features of human character. And the little joy of the child who plants a seed and sees himself instrumental in the creation of a flower, forcibly reminds us of that beneficence which built the heavens and the earth, and saw that it was good.

THE RIVER

Among the bulrushes I lay
Which deck the river's murmuring tide;
Upon those banks no men abide,
But swans come sailing in their pride
And graceful float into the quiet bay.

Fast sailed the golden fishes by,
And some leaped out to see the sky,
Nor saw the bird that stooped from high
Until he broke the wave's white crest
And bore the flapping fish aloft unto his nest.

An April cloud blew o'er the stream
And cast its big drops down,
They oped the lily's covering brown
And shed its steaming perfume round,
And golden insects flew unto that flower supreme.

. . . . . .

DRAMA

July.

. . . The grand object of the Drama is to claim the affections by awakening . . . sympathy. It represents an accumulation of human wo with gorgeous pomp to move the pity and indignation of a susceptible audience. Its triumph is complete, when the passions of the multitude, which naturally move in unison, at last aid each other to some general utterance, and consent to the weakness of feelings, which in an individual would be ridiculous. From the Theatre, then, drive out the buyers and sellers of corruption who have made it a den of vice, and make it an Oracle of those opinions and sentiments which multiply and strengthen the bonds of society.

The more we reflect upon the subject, the more thoroughly we shall be convinced how practicable it is to produce a Theatre of an actively useful character. It is a mistake to suppose that only vicious gratification can raise sufficient ex-

citement to draw men together around a stage. On the contrary, what an inextinguishable thirst for *eloquence*, however rude, exists in every breast! . . .

It is natural that we pant to feel those thrilling sensations of a most agreeable character which passionate and powerful declamation never fails to move. They are akin to the emotions produced by *the sublime*, in sense or thought. And for these, the fictitious distresses of exalted personages, amid the passage of wonderful events, such as a *pure* play will freely admit, seem to afford every desirable facility. . . . Besides we have direct testimony of the certainty of success, in the instance of the Greek Tragedy, which, without impurity, was universally popular at Athens . . .

REASON

Sunday, *September* 7.

[As for] that hoary-headed error which considers Reason as opposed to Scripture, and which frequently and loudly condemns Reason as an adversary and a seducer, as unbelieving and profane. . . . Instead of placing idiots in his universe, capable only of sensual gratification, able only to obey instincts, and requiring every mo-

ment a new direction from heaven to prevent them from grovelling in the dirt, or being destroyed by the beasts, God has peopled it with images of himself, and kindled within them the light of his own understanding — a portion of that ray which illuminates, as it formed, the Creation. He has communicated to them an intelligence by which they are enabled to see their way in a universe where other beings are blind; to behold *him*, and their relation to him; to read and understand all those communications which in past or future time he is pleased to make; it is an intelligence by which they find themselves distinguished from his other creations. There are about and amidst them a thousand different properties; there are hills and waters, trees and flowers, the living forms of nature and the stars of the firmament; — but they are still and brutish — there is no eye and voice within them to detect and declare the stupendous glory which surrounds them; they lack that living spirit which opens the eyes of man, and without which the Universe is as if it were not, and the glory of Deity is darkness. It is an intelligence which soars above these charms of the material world, and can contemn them in the comparison with the objects which it is capable of enjoying. In fine, it is an

intelligence which reveals to man another condition of existence, and a nearer approach to the Supreme Being. This intelligence is *Reason*.

Yet some there are who tell you, as if it involved no inconsistency, and certainly no sin, to avoid profaning the revelations of God by submitting them to the tribunal of man's reason,—who seek to walk implicitly by a law which they do not and will not understand, because they refuse to apply to its explanation that light with which their maker has furnished them. It is not only a wilful perversion and abuse of a priceless gift, but it is a most ungrateful neglect of divine mercy, and a neglect which incurs a tremendous responsibility. . . .

DRAMA (*continued*)

October.

In proposing schemes of reformation in so important a matter as the Drama, one should be cautious to avoid running into systems too visionary for popular understanding. The scholar in his closet must beware lest his poetical imaginations of the beauty of Tragedy lead him into fields beyond the track of common opinion, and to render his speculations of no use. Nevertheless, it appears to me that the bold and beauti-

ful personification in Milton's *Penseroso* is not an unapt description of the true drama:—

> Sometime let gorgeous Tragedy
> With sceptred pall come sweeping by,
> Presenting Thebes and Pelops' line
> And the tale of Troy divine.

For we wish that Tragedy should take advantage of that weakness, or perhaps virtue, in our nature which bears such an idolatrous love for the emblems of royalty, and that its moral lessons should be couched in the grand and pathetic fables which antiquity affords. Owing to the identity of human character in all ages, there is as much instruction in the tale of Troy as in the Annals of the French Revolution. . . .

There is an embellishment which I would recommend, though out of place here. I mean the introduction of prophecies. The author of *Guy Mannering* and the *Bride of Lammermoor* knew the value of the charm and has made fine use of the fascination. It is the most beautiful use of supernatural machinery in fiction.

ORGAN

October, Thursday Evening.

When I was a lad, said the bearded islander, we had commonly a kind of vast musical ap-

paratus in the Pacific islands which must appear as fabulous to you as it proved fatal to us. On the banks of the rivers there were abundance of siphar trees, which consist of vast trunks perforated by a multitude of natural tubes without having any external verdure. When the roots of these were connected with the waters of the river, the water was instantly sucked up by some of the tubes and discharged again by others, and, when properly echoed, the operation [was] attended by the most beautiful musical sounds in the world. My countrymen built their churches to the Great Zoa upon the margin of the water and enclosed a suitable number of these trees, hoping to entertain the ears of the god with this sweet harmony. Finding however by experience that the more water the pipes drew the more rich and various were the sounds of the Organ, they constructed a very large temple with high walls of clay and stone to make the echoes very complete, and enclosed a hundred siphars. When the edifice was complete, six thousand people assembled to hear the long expected song. After they had waited a long time and the waters of the river were beginning to rise, the Instrument suddenly began to emit the finest notes imaginable. Through some of the broader pipes the

water rushed with the voice of thunder, and through others with the sweetness of one of your lutes. In a short time the effect of the music was such that it seemed to have made all the hearers mad. They laughed and wept alternately, and began to dance, and such was their delight, that they did not perceive the disaster which had befallen their Organ. Owing to the unusual swell of the River and to some unaccountable irregularity in the ducts, the pipes began to discharge their contents within the chapel. In a short time the evil became but too apparent, for the water rose in spouts from the top of the larger ducts and fell upon the multitude within. Meantime the music swelled louder and louder, and every note was more ravishing than the last. The inconvenience of the falling water which drenched them, was entirely forgotten, until finally the whole host of pipes discharged, every one, a volume of water upon the charmed congregation. The faster poured the water, the sweeter grew the music, and the floor being covered with the torrent, the people began to float upon it with intolerable extacies. Finally the whole multitude swam about in this deluge, holding up their heads with open months and ears as if to swallow the melody, whereby they swallowed

much water. Many hundreds were immediately drowned and the enormous pipes, as they emptied the river, swelled their harmony to such perfection that the ear could no longer bear it, and they who escaped the drowning died of the exquisite music. Thenceforward there was no more use of the Siphar trees in the Pacific islands.

THE LAND OF NOT

. . . It is now nineteen years since I left the Land of Not, and I may safely say that, in the countries in which I have passed my time since that period, it has been invariably true that there is more crime, misery and vexation in every one of them, in the course of a single year, than transpires in the peaceful Land of Not in the lapse of many centuries. Except for the existence of one single institution which has been established from time immemorial, there is no question that a vast tide of emigration would rapidly flow into that country. This institution is a rigorous Alien Act which ordains that no man who leaves the limits of the country shall ever be permitted to set foot within it again. But, to my knowledge, many who have left it have often afterwards looked back to its pleasant abodes, and desired in vain to return. . . .

Saturday Evening, *November.*

My adventurous and superficial pen has not hesitated to advance thus far upon these old but sublime foundations of our faith; and thus, without adding a straw to the weight of evidence or making the smallest discovery, it has still served to elevate somewhat my own notions by bringing me within prospect of the labours of the sages. After the primitive apostles, I apprehend that Christianity is indebted to those who have established the grounds upon which it rests; to Clarke, Butler, and Paley; to Sherlock, and to the incomparable Newton. And when it shall please my wayward Imagination to suffer me to go drink of these chrystal fountains; or when my better judgment shall have at last triumphed over the dæmon Imagination, and shall itself conduct me thither, — I shall be proud and glad of the privilege. For the present, I must be content to make myself wiser as I may, by the same loose speculations upon divine themes. . .

CONCLUSION

I have come to the close of the sheets which I dedicated to the Genius of America, and notice that I have devoted nothing in my book to any peculiar topics which concern my country.

But is not every effort that her sons make to advance the intellectual interests of the world, and every new thought which is struck out from the mines of religion and morality, a forward step in the path of her greatness? Peace be with her progressive greatness,—and prosperity crown her giant minds. A victory is achieved to-day for one,[1] whose name perchance is written highest in the volume of futurity.

1 Webster was chosen representative to Congress by a majority of 1078 votes this morning. (R. W. E.)

Boston, *November* 4, 1822.

JOURNAL IX

THE WIDE WORLD, NO. 8

DEDICATION

BOSTON, *November* 6, 1822.

To glory which is departed, to majesty which hath ceased, to intellect which is quenched — I bring no homage, — no, not a grain of gold. For why seek to contradict the voice of Nature and of God, which saith over them, "It is finished," by wasting our imaginations upon the deaf ear of the dead? Turn rather to the mighty multitude, the thunder of whose footsteps shakes now the earth; whose faces are flushed by the blood of life; whose eye is enlightened by a living soul. Is there none in this countless assembly who hath a claim on the reverence of the sons of Minerva?

I have chosen one from the throng. Upon his brow have the Muses hung no garland. His name hath never been named in the halls of fashion, or the palaces of state; but I saw Prophecy drop the knee before him, and I hastened to pay the tribute of a page.

VISION OF SLAVERY[1]

In my dreams I departed to distant climes and to different periods, and my fancy presented before me many extraordinary societies, and many old and curious institutions. I sat on the margin of the River of Golden Sands when the thirsty leopard came thither to drink. It was just dawn and the shades were chased rapidly from the Eastern firmament by the golden magnificence of day. As I contemplated the brilliant spectacle of an African morning I thought on

1 The slave-trade was abolished by law in the United States in 1808, but was unlawfully continued until the Civil War. Massachusetts had no slaves in 1770, but they were legally held in New York, Rhode Island and Connecticut at the time this journal was written.

The question had just come to the front in the fruitless opposition to the admission of Missouri as a slave-state.

The Abolition Movement was not begun by William Lloyd Garrison until 1831.

Emerson's effort always to consider the object temperately and fairly appears twenty-two years later in his speech on the Anniversary of Emancipation in the British West Indies; and later, even during the great conflict, in his proposal to compensate the Southerners for their loss.

Of his presentation of the apologies for Slavery in this journal it should be said that he had had an agreeable and well-bred Southerner for his chum, and so heard their point of view.

those sages of this storied land who instructed the infancy of the world. Meanwhile the sun arose and cast a full light over a vast and remarkable landscape. About the river, the country was green and its bed reflected the sunbeams from pebbles and gold. Far around was an ample plain with a soil of yellow sand, glittering everywhere with dew and interspersed with portions of forest, which extended into the plain from the mountains which surrounded this wide Amphitheatre. The distant roar of lions ceased to be heard, and I saw the leopard bathing his spotted limbs and swimming towards the woods which skirted the water. But his course was stopped; an arrow from the wood pierced his head, and he floated lifeless ashore. I looked then to see whence the slayer should have come, and beheld not far off a little village of huts built of canes. Presently I saw a band of families come out from their habitations; and these naked men, women and children sung a hymn to the sun, and came merrily down to the river with nets in their hands to fish. And a crimson bird with a yellow crest flew over their heads as they went, and lighted on a rock in the midst of the river and sung pleasantly to the savages while he brushed his feathers in the stream. The boys plunged into the river and swam

towards the rock. But upon a sudden I saw many men dressed in foreign garb run out from the wood where the leopard had been killed; and these surrounded the fishers, and bound them with cords, and hastily carried them to their boats, which lay concealed behind the trees. So they sailed down the stream, talking aloud and laughing as they went; but they that were bound gnashed their teeth and uttered so piteous a howl that I thought it were a mercy if the river had swallowed them.

In my dream, I launched my skiff to follow the boats and redeem the captives. They went in ships to other lands and I could never reach them, albeit I came near enough to hear the piercing cry of the chained victims, which was louder than the noise of the Ocean. In the nations to which they were brought they were sold for a price, and compelled to labour all the day long, and scourged with whips until they fell dead in the fields, and found rest in the grave.

Canst thou ponder the vision, and shew why Providence suffers the land of its richest productions to be thus defiled? Do human bodies lodge immortal souls,—and is this tortured life of bondage and tears a fit education for the

bright ages of heaven and the commerce of angels? Is man the Image of his Maker,—and shall this fettered and broken frame, this marred and brutalized soul become perfect as He is perfect? This slave hath eat the bread of captivity and drank the waters of bitterness, and cursed the light of the sun as it dawned on his bed of straw, and worked hard and suffered long, while never an idea of God hath kindled in his mind from the hour of his birth to the hour of his death; and yet thou sayest that a merciful Lord made man in his benevolence to live and enjoy, to take pleasure in his works and worship him forever. Confess that there are secrets in that Providence which no human eye can penetrate, which darken the prospect of Faith, and teach us the weakness of our Philosophy.

November 8.

At least we may look farther than to the simple fact and perhaps aid our faith by freer speculation. I believe that nobody now regards the maxim "that all men are born equal," as any thing more than a convenient hypothesis or an extravagant declamation. For the reverse is true,—that all men are born unequal in personal powers, and in those essential circum-

stances, of time, parentage, country, fortune. The least knowledge of the natural history of man adds another important particular to these; namely, what class of men he belongs to— European, Moor, Tartar, African? Because Nature has plainly assigned different degrees of intellect to these different races, and the barriers between are insurmountable.

This inequality is an indication of the design of Providence that some should lead, and some should serve. For when an effect invariably takes place from causes which Heaven established, we surely say with safety, that Providence designed that result.

Throughout society there is therefore not only the direct and acknowledged relation of king and subject, master and servant, but a secret dependence quite as universal, of one man upon another, which sways habits, opinions, conduct. This prevails to an infinite extent and, however humbling the analogy, it is nevertheless true, that the same pleasure and confidence which the dog and horse feel when they rely upon the superior intelligence of man, is felt by the lower parts of our own species with reference to the higher.

Now, with these concessions, the question

comes to this: whether this known and admitted assumption of power by one part of mankind over the other, can ever be pushed to the extent of total possession, and that without the will of the slave?

It can hardly be said that the whole difference of the *will* divides the *natural* servitude of which we have spoken from the forced servitude of "slavery." For it is not voluntary, on my part, that I am born a subject; contrariwise, if my opinion had been consulted, it is ten to one I should have been the Great Mogul. The circumstances in which every man finds himself he owes to fortune and not to himself. And those men who happen to be born in the lowest caste in India, suffer much more perhaps than the kidnapped African, with no other difference in their lot than this, that God made the one wretched, and man, the other. Except that there is a dignity in suffering from the ordinances of Supreme Power — which is not at all common to the other class — one lot is as little enviable as the other.

When all this is admitted, the question may still remain entirely independent and untouched — apart from the consideration of slavery as agreeable or contradictory to the analogies of nature — whether any individual has a right to deprive any

other individual of freedom without his consent; or whether he may continue to withhold the freedom which another hath taken away?

Upon the first question,— whether one man may forcibly take away the freedom of another,— the weakness and incapacity of Africans would seem to have no bearing; though it may affect the second. Still it may be advanced that the beasts of the field are all evidently subjected to the dominion of man, and, with the single restriction of the laws of humanity, are left entirely at his will. And why are they, and how do we acquire this declaration of heaven? Manifestly from a view of the perfect adaptation of these animals to the necessities of man, and of the advantage which many of them find in leaving the forest for the barnyard. If they had reason, their strength would be so far superior to ours, that, besides our inability to use them, it would be inconsistent with nature. So that these three circumstances are the foundation of our dominion; viz. their want of reason; their adaptation to our wants; and their own advantage (when domesticated). But these three circumstances may very well apply to the condition of the Blacks, and it may be hard to tell exactly where the difference lies. Is it in *Reason?* If we speak in general of the two classes, Man and

Beast, we say that they are separated by the distinction of Reason, and the want of it; and the line of this distinction is very broad. But if we abandon this generalization, and compare the classes of one with the classes of the other, we shall find our boundary line growing narrower and narrower, and individuals of one species approaching individuals of the other, until the limits become finally lost in the mingling of the classes. . . .

November 14.

If we pursue a revolting subject to its greatest lengths, we should find that in all those three circumstances which are the foundations of our dominion over the beasts, very much may be said to apply them to the African species; even in the last, viz., the advantage which they derive from our care; for the slaveholders violently assert that their slaves are happier than the freedmen of their class; and the slaves refuse oftentimes the offer of their freedom. Nor is this owing merely to the barbarity which has placed them out of the power of attaining a competence by themselves. For it is true that many a slave under the warm roof of a humane master, with easy labours and regular subsistence, enjoys more happiness than his naked brethren, parched

with thirst on a burning sand, or endangered in the crying wilderness of their native land.

This is all that is offered *in behalf* of slavery; we shall next attempt to knock down the hydra.

To establish, by whatever specious argumentation, the perfect expediency of the worst institution on earth is *prima facie* an assault upon Reason and Common Sense. No ingenious sophistry can ever reconcile the unperverted mind to the pardon of *slavery*; nothing but tremendous familiarity, and the bias of private *interest*. Under the influence of better arguments than can be offered in support of slavery we should sustain our tranquillity by the confidence that no surrender of our opinion is ever demanded, and that we are only required to discover the lurking fallacy which the disputant acknowledges to exist. It is an old dispute, which is not now and never will be totally at rest, whether the human mind be or be not a free agent. And the asserter of either side must be scandalized by the bare naming of the theory that man may impose servitude on his brother. For if he is himself free, and it offends the attributes of God to have him otherwise, it is manifestly a bold stroke of impiety to wrest the same liberty from his fellow. And if he is not free, then this inhuman barbar-

ity ascends to derive its origin from the author of all necessity.

A creature who is bound by his hopes of salvation to imitate the benevolence of better beings, and to do all the kindness in his power, fastens manacles on his fellow with an ill grace. A creature who holds a little lease of life upon the arbitrary tenure of God's good pleasure improves his moment strangely by abusing God's best works, his own peers.

MORAL LAW

Saturday Evening, *November* 16.

The child who refuses to pollute its little lips with a lie, and the archangel who refuses with indignation to rebel in the armies of heaven against the Most High, act alike in obedience to a law which pervades all intelligent beings. This law is the Moral Sense; a rule coëxtensive and coëval with Mind. It derives its existence from the eternal character of the Deity, of which we spoke above; and seems of itself to imply, and therefore to prove his Existence. . . . Whence comes this strong universal feeling that approves or abhors actions? Manifestly not from *matter*, which is altogether unmoved by it, and the con-

nection of which with it is a thing absurd — but from a *Mind*, of which it is the essence. That Mind is God.

This Sentiment which we bear within us, is so subtle and unearthly in its nature, so entirely distinct from all sense and matter, and hence so difficult to be examined, and withal so decisive and invariable in its dictates — that it clearly partakes of another world than this, and looks forward to it in the end. It is further to be observed of it, that its dictates are never blind, are never capricious, but, however they may seem to differ, are always discovered on a close and profound examination to point to a faultless and unattainable perfection. They seem to refer to a sublime course of life and action which nowhere exists, or to which we are not privy; and to be an index of the Creator's character lent to mankind in vindication or illustration of the command, "Be ye perfect as He is perfect."

This Sentiment differs from the affections of the heart and from the faculties of the mind. The affections are undiscriminating and capricious. The Moral Sense is not. The powers of the intellect are sometimes wakeful and sometimes dull, alive with interest to one subject and dead to the charm of another. There are no ebbs

and flows, no change, no contradiction in *this*. Its lively approbation never loses its pleasure; its aversion never loses its sting. Its oracular answers might be sounded through the world, for they are always the same. Motives and characters are amenable to it; and the golden rules which are the foundation of its judgments we feel and acknowledge, but do not understand. . . .

JUSTICE

"Even handed Justice
Commends the ingredients of our poisoned chalice
To our own lips."

The bold misdoer who transgresses the law of Justice grapples with he knows not what. He has offended against an essential attribute of the Divinity, which will plead against him inexorably until it be avenged. His rash hand has disordered a part of the moral machinery of the Universe and he is in peril of being crushed by the mischief he has caused.

. . . How shall man reconcile his freedom with that eternal necessary chain of cause and consequence which binds him and Nature down to an irreversible decree? How shall he reconcile his freedom with that prophetic omniscience which beheld his end long before the infant en-

tered on the world? Perhaps he is a slave — and men have worn his limbs with irons, and his soul with suffering; the name of virtue and the smile of kindness never have stooped to alleviate his hard and bitter bondage; but ere his little day of apathy and distress was done, he cursed God and died; — hath he descended into hell? Or how dost thou reconcile the creation and destiny of this being with that Infinite and benevolent Justice that would not abuse its Omnipotence, and would not create a mind to be miserable?

Tell not that man of those feelings and thoughts which give a joy to *your* existence and warm your heart to the world; for it will be but to mock his wretchedness. Tell him not of the dignity of human nature, of its *benevolence* and *philanthropy*, — he will clank his chains at the word. He scoffs bitterly at your pictures of the golden gates of Heaven, for they are closed on him.

The man is bold who undertakes to answer beyond a doubt these perplexing questions. But theology would be a vain science, unworthy of our attention, if it left them all in their full force, without notice or solution.

If an ignorant man were carried from his closet

to the prisons and penitentiaries of a vast kingdom and shewn a multitude of men confined and scourged and forced to labour, and informed that this was the act of the government, if he knew nothing more of that state and perhaps foolishly conceived that its limits extended no further than the walls wherein he stood, it would be a very plain conclusion that this government was a savage and outrageous tyranny; while perhaps at that very moment the government was the most perfect and beneficent in the world. Our rash conclusions from the dark side of human affairs are analogous to these, and like these are to be corrected by broader views of the system which we misunderstand.

The questions we have named, are incidental to the subject, but of such importance, that we shall digress from the main topic to attempt to answer them. The endeavour is always laudable to clear up the darkness which settles around portions of the system. God in heaven is answerable for his works, to those principles which he hath set within us to judge of them. To the discussion of some of them, our nature is incompetent.[1]

1 The young man confesses this inability to satisfactorily account for all misery when he considers it under the two dis-

One of the best satires upon women is the popular opinion of the third century, that they who took wives were of all others the most subject to the influence of evil demons. . . . Men's minds visit heaven as they visit earth, and hence the Turkish heaven is a Harem; the Scandinavian, a hunting field; the Arabian, a place of wheaten cakes and murmuring fountains. We've supple understandings and so it comes that a new religion ever suits itself to the state in which 't is born, whether despotism or democracy, as Montesquieu has remarked.

Four daughters make the family of Time,
But rosy Summer is the darling child.

BENEVOLENCE

Saturday Evening, *November* 23.

The hours of social intercourse, of gratified hope, of the festive board, have just now yielded to quieter pleasures of the closet and the pen. This tender flesh is warmly clad, the blood leaps in the vessels of life, Health and Hope write their results on the passing moment,—and these

cussions of Benevolence a few pages farther on. In the latter of these his favourite doctrine of Compensation appears.

things make the pleasure of a mortal, bodily, mental being. There are in the world at this moment one hundred million men whose history today may match with mine, not counting the numberless ones whose day was happier. There are also in existence here a countless crowd of inferior animals who have had their lesser cup filled full with pleasure. The sunny lakes reflect the noonday beams from the glittering tribes which cover its bottom, rapid as thought in their buoyant motions, leaping with the elasticity and gladness of life. The boundless Ocean supports in its noisy waves its own great population, — the beautiful dolphin, the enormous whale, and huge sea-monsters of a thousand families and a thousand uncouth gambols dash through its mighty domain in the fulness of sensual enjoyment. The air is fanned by innumerable wings, the green woods are vocal with the song of the insect and the bird; the beasts of the field fill all the lands untenanted by man, and beneath the sod the mole and the worm take their pleasure. All this vast mass of animated matter is moving and basking under the broad orb of the sun, — is drinking in the sweetness of the air, is feeding on the fruits of nature, — is pleased with life, and loth to lose it. All this pleasure flows

from a source. That source is the Benevolence of God.

This is the first superficial glance at the economy of the world and necessarily leaves out a thousand circumstances. Let us take a closer view, and begin with the human mind. I find within me a motley array of feelings that have no connection with my clayey frame, and I call them my *mind*. Every day of my life, this mind draws a thousand curious conclusions from the different things which it beholds. With a wanton variety which tires of sameness, it throws all its thoughts into innumerable lights, and changes the fantastic scene by varying its own operations upon it; by combining and separating, by comparing and judging, by remembering and inventing all things. Every one of these little changes within, produces a pleasure, the pleasure of power or of sight. But besides the mere fact that the mind acts, there is a most rich variety in thought, and I grossly undervalue the gift I possess, if I limit its capacity to the puny round of every day's sensations. It is a ticket of admission to another world of ineffable grandeur — to unknown orders of things which are as *real* as they are stupendous. As soon as it has advanced a little in life it opens its eye to thoughts which tax its

whole power, and delight it by their greatness and novelty. These suggest kindred conceptions, which give birth to others, and thus draw the mind on in a path which it perceives is interminable, and is of interminable joy. To this high favoured intellect is added an intuition that it can never end, and that with its choice it can go forward to take the boon of immortal Happiness. These are causes and states of pleasure which no reason can deny. But this is the true history of all the individuals of the mighty nations that breathe today. These point also to a source — which is the Benevolence of God.

But a groan of the dying, a cry of torture from the diseased, the sob of the mourner, answer to this thanksgiving of human nature and produce a discord in our anthem of praise. If God is good, why are any of his creatures unhappy? . . .

Those who consider the foundations of human happiness find that it is a contrasted and comparative thing. . . . High and multiplied sources of pleasure are often in our possession, without being enjoyed, for they never were lacking; God disturbs or removes them for a time; and he is dull, who sees no wisdom in this mode of giving them value and sharpening the blunted edge of appetite. Thus Health and Peace are

insipid goods, until you have been able to compare them with the torments of Pain and the visitation of War. And after this comparison has once been made, man runs riot in holding them.

Next, it should be remembered that we wisely assume the righteousness of the Creator in placing man in a probationary state. We do not seek with vain ambition to question the abstruse and unsearchable ground of this ordination, because it is plain matter of fact that we are incompetent to the discussion. This being assumed, there is no longer any doubt of the Divine Benevolence arising from the existence of evil. Evil is the rough and stony foundation of human Virtue; weaning man away from the seductive dangers of vicious, transient, destructive pleasures to a hold and security of Paradise where they are perpetual and perfect.

Of Professor N., Shakespeare long ago wrote the good and bad character:

> Oh it is excellent
> To have a giant's strength, but it is tyrannous
> To use it like a giant.[1]

1 Evidently Andrews Norton, Professor of Sacred Literature. Mr. Cabot, in his *Memoirs of Emerson* (p. 334), speaks

[SOLITARY FANCIES]

Rich in the playful joys of solitude
The peaceful Muse begins her jubilee
When Night's black car, sprinkled with golden stars,
Has chased the Sun's magnificence away.
Pleased with the closet's motley furniture,
And broken shadows, where the elves and gnomes
Fight with the rats for noise or victory,
The Muse roves boldly on her vagrant wing,
Disdains the recent times and days of dwarfs,
And this cold land Apollo never knew;
Abandons with proud plumes the passing hour,
And follows Fancy through a thousand worlds.

It is a curious spectacle, to see
The panorama of unnumbered hues
That her wild journey marshals round her eye.
But icy Reason scowls upon the shew, —
And its gay battlements and beaming towers
And shining forms all vanish at his frown.
Yet I, who never bowed obedient neck
To Reason's iron yoke, will still rebel
And vex the tyrant in his ancient halls.
I 'll ponder pleasantly the changing scenes
And tell their wonders loudly on the lyre.

of him as "a man of acute intellect and commanding personality and, I suppose, the foremost theologian of the liberal Christians." Sixteen years later, Emerson, after the delivery of his Divinity School Address, felt the weight of this giant's attack.

November 29, 1822.

The ardour of my college friendship for—— is nearly extinct, and it is with difficulty that I can now recall those sensations of vivid pleasure which his presence was wont to waken spontaneously for a period of more than two years. To be so agreeably excited by the features of an individual personally unknown to me, and for so long a time, was surely a curious incident in the history of so cold a being, and well worth a second thought. At the very beginning of our singular acquaintance, I noticed the circumstance in my Wide World, with an expression of curiosity with regard to the effect which time would have upon those feelings. To this day, our glance at meeting is not that of indifferent persons, and were he not so thoroughly buried in his martial cares, I might still entertain the hope of departed hours. Probably the abatement of my solitary enthusiasm is owing to the discouraging reports which I have gathered of his pursuits and character, so entirely inconsistent with the indications of his face. But it were much better that our connexion should stop, and pass off, as it now will, than to have had it formed, and then broken by the late discovery of insurmountable barriers to friendship. From the first, I preferred to preserve the terms

which kept alive so much sentiment rather than a more familiar intercourse which I feared would end in indifference.

BENEVOLENCE (*continued*)

Saturday Evening, *November* 30.

Heraclitus was a fool, who wept always for the miseries of human life. Or was he blind and deaf to beauty and melody? In his day, was the sky black, and were snakes instead of flowers coiled in his path? Was his mind reversed in its organization;—had he Despair for Hope, and Remorse for Memory? Could his disordered eye discern a *savage* Power sitting in this Splendid Universe, thwarting the *good* chances of Fortune and promoting the *bad*, sowing seeds of *sorrow* for *glory*, turning grace and tranquillity to desolation, and heaven to hell? Then let him weep on. True philosophy hath a clearer sight, and remarks amid the vast disproportions of human condition a great equalization of happiness; an intimate intermingling of pleasure with every gradation, down to the very lowest of all. Pleasant and joyous are the connexions of our sympathy and affection — 'tis proved by the very tear which marks their dissolution; and even that pang of separation and loss is relieved by its own indulgence. . . .

Happiness lies at our own door. Misery is further away. Until I know by bitter personal experience that the world is the accursed seat of all misfortunes, and as long as I find it a garden of delights — I am bound to adore the Beneficent Author of my life. . . . No representations of foreign misery can liquidate your debt to Heaven. You must join the choral hymn to which the Universe resounds in the ear of Faith, and I think, of Philosophy. . . .

The mind can perceive a harmonious whole, combined and overruled by a sublime Necessity, which embraces in its mighty circle the freedom of the individuals, and without subtracting from any, directs all to their appropriate ends. It perceives a purpose to pain, and sees how the instruction and perfection of myriads is brought about by the spectacle of guilt and its punishment. That great and primeval Necessity may make impossible an Universe without evil, and perhaps founds happiness *everywhere*, as *here*, upon the contrast of suffering. This question lies at the sources of things, and we are only indulged with an intimation that may make out the just goodness of the Deity.

(This connection may be deeper and more intimate than we are apt to imagine, and the cir-

cumstances observed just now, seem to indicate that it is. That connection, which subsists *here* in *character*, will subsist in *condition* hereafter. And some plan will be developed, in which the good of *Evil* will be made plain on the general scale, that cannot be explained upon the particular.) . . .

GREATNESS

Every man who enumerates the catalogue of his acquaintance is privately conscious, however reluctant to confess the inferiority, of a certain number of minds which do outrun and command his own, in whose company, despite the laws of good breeding and the fences of affectation, his own spirit bows like the brothers' sheaves to Joseph's sheaf. He remembers the soothsayer's faithful account of Antony's guardian genius which among other men was high and unmatchable, but quailed before Cæsar's. He remembers also other some of his companions, over whom his own spirit exercises the same mastery. And let no man complain of the inequality of such an ordination, or call Fortune partial in the distribution of her blessings.

AMERICA

December 21.

There is everything in America's favour, to one who puts faith in those proverbial prophecies of the Westward progress of the Car of Empire. Though there may be no more barbarians left to overrun Europe and extinguish forever the memory of its greatness, yet its rotten states, like Spain, may come to their decline by the festering and inveteracy of the faults of government. Aloof from the contagion during the long progress of their decline, America hath ample interval to lay deep and solid foundations for the greatness of the New World. And along the shores of the South Continent, to which the dregs of corruption of European society had been unfortunately transplanted, the fierceness of the present conflict for independence will, no doubt, act as a powerful remedy to the disease, by stirring up the slumbering spirits of those indolent zones to a consciousness of their power and destiny. Here, then, new Romes are growing, and the Genius of man is brooding over the wide boundaries of infant empires, where yet are to be drunk the intoxicating draughts of honour and renown; here are to be played over again

the bloody games of human ambition, bigotry and revenge, and the stupendous Drama of the passions to be repeated. Other Cleopatras shall seduce, Alexanders fight, and Cæsars die. The pillars of social strength, which we occupy ourselves in founding thus firmly to endure to future ages as the monuments of the wisdom of this, are to be shaken on their foundations with convulsions proportioned to their adamantine strength. The time is come, the hour is struck; already the actors in this immense and tremendous scene have begun to assemble. The doors of life in our mountain-land are opened, and the vast swarm of population is crowding in, bearing in their hands the burden of Sorrow and Sin, of glory, and science, which are to be mingled in their future fates. In the events and interests of these empires, the old tales of history and the fortunes of departed nations shall be thoroughly forgotten and the name of Rome or Britain fall seldom on the ear.

In that event, when the glory of Plato of Greece, of Cicero of Rome, and of Shakspeare of England shall have died, who are they that are to write their names where all time shall read them, and their words be the oracle of millions? Let those who would pluck the lot of

Immortality from Fate's Urn, look well to the future prospects of America.

Friday Evg. *Dec.* 21, 1822.

AUTHORS OR BOOKS QUOTED OR REFERRED TO IN JOURNALS OF 1822

Homer; Simonides; Heraclitus; Sophocles, *Electra;* Thucydides; Demosthenes;

Bible; Zoroaster;

Cicero; Lucretius; Horace; Plutarch; Tacitus, *Germania;* Seneca; Marcus Aurelius;

Mediæval Mystery Plays;

Chaucer; Shakspeare; Ben Jonson; Bacon;

Milton, *Paradise Lost;* Boileau;

Locke, *On the Human Understanding;* William Sherlock, *Sermon on Faith;*

Newton; Burnet, *Memorial;* Fontenelle;

Pope; Richardson, *Novels;* Montesquieu; Butler, *Analogy;* Voltaire;

David Hartley, *Observations on Man;* Dr. Johnson, *Vanity of Human Wishes;* Samuel Clarke; Priestly;

Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire;* Paley; Logan, *Yarrow; Speeches* of Pitt, Burke, Fox; Dugald Stewart, *Philosophy of the Mind;*

Claudius Buchanan, *Christian Researches in India;* Abernethy; Buckminster, *Sermons;* Arabian Nights;

Scott, *The Pirate*, *Minstrelsy;* Byron, *Corsair*, *Childe Harold;* Fearing, *Travels in the United States;* Sismondi, *Italian Republics;* Leigh Hunt, *Song.*

JOURNAL X

THE WIDE WORLD, NO. 9

"Pass not unblest the Genius of the place."

Saturday Evening, *December* 21, 1822.

To the Genius of the Future, I dedicate my page.

"Incipe. Vivendi qui recte prorogat horam,
Rusticus expectat dum defluat amnis; at ille
Labitur et labetur in omne volubilis aevum."

[GOOD HOPE]

. . . If the misanthrope take refuge in *analogy* — it will fail him. For though we bewail the imperfection of sublunary things, yet all things in the mineral, vegetable and animal kingdom have a *perfection*, which, though not attained in the hundred instances,—*is* attained in the thousand; is attained much oftener than not. Man in many trials has failed; . . . But now a preparation is made for another experiment which begins with infinite advantages. I need not name the daily blessings which are diffused over the present generation and distinguish them above antiquity. I notice only that they possess Christianity and a

civilization more deeply ingrafted in the mind (by reason of the extraordinary aids it derives from inventions and discoveries) than ever it has before been. It is the nature of these advantages to multiply themselves. Providence ordains that every improvement extend an influence of infinite extent over the face of society. For centuries back, the progress of human affairs has appeared to indicate some better era; and finally when all events were prepared, God has opened a new theatre for this ultimate trial. This country is daily rising to a higher comparative importance and attracting the eyes of all the rest of the world to the development of its embryo greatness.

ALFRED THE GREAT

Christmas, *December* 25.

If (as saith Voltaire) all that is related of Alfred the Great be true, I know not the man that ever lived, more worthy of the gratitude of posterity. I hope the reservation means nothing. There is not one incredible assertion made either of his abilities, his character, or his actions. Besides it was not an age, nor were Saxon monks the men, to invent and adorn another Cyropaedia. Sharon Turner, an ambitious flashing writer, and elsewhere a loon, hath done well by Alfred. His

praise rests not upon monkish eulogy or vague tradition, but upon *facts*. . . .

December 26, 1822.

I have heard this evening and shall elsewhere record Prof. Everett's lecture upon Eleusinian mysteries, Dodona, and St. Sophia's temple. . . .

Though the lecture contained nothing original, and no very remarkable views, yet it was an account of antiquities bearing everywhere that "fine Roman hand," and presented in the inimitable style of *our Cicero*. "Bigotry and Philosophy are the opposite poles of the judgment, and the scepticism of Hume and Gibbon is as different as the superstition of the Catholics from the freedom of the Protestant." (Professor E.)

. . . . . .

Saturday Evening, *January* 11.

"My bosom's lord sits lightly on his throne"; I cannot distinctly discern the cause; tomorrow he will sit heavily there; and after a few days more, he shall cease to be. The connexions which he nursed with earthly society shall be broken off, and the memory of his individual influence shall be obliterated from human hearts. It may chance that he will resume his thought elsewhere; that while the place from whence he passed forgets

him, he shall nourish the fires of a pure ambition in some freer sanctuary than this world holds. It is possible that the infinity of another world may so crowd his conception, as to divest him of that cumbrous sense of *self* that weighs him down,— until he lose his individual existence in his efforts for the Universe.

TIME

. . . The years of infancy fled, and those toys dwindled away to make room for the splendid hopes and enthusiastic resolutions of youth. The sky was not so bright, and alas! not so changeable as its promises. It revelled in the sight of beauty, and the sound of music, in the motion of the limbs, in the intercourse of friends, and in all the joys of a pleasant and gorgeous world. But the crimson flush went from its cheek and the joyous light from its eye; its bones hardened into manhood, and its years departed beyond the flood. Reason watched them as they departed, and was bitterly mortified to find how insignificant they became in the view. Those changes and events which had engaged the mind by their gigantic greatness sunk now to pigmy dimensions, and so dim were their images upon the memory that it

was hard to believe they were not altogether a dream.

After a few more turnings of the globe in its orbit, manhood, age and life itself will have passed, and as I advance, that which I have left behind will continually grow less and less. As I reach and pass successively the several epochs of existence, the things of former pursuit will degenerate in my esteem. All, all, will be unremembered as if they had never been. The mind writes daily, in its recollections of the past, but one epitaph upon Time — "Vanity of Vanities, all is Vanity!" God forbid that this be the faithful history of the Universe. . . .

MORAL SENSE

. . . There is one distinction amid these fading phenomena — one decided distinction which is real and eternal and which will survive nature — I mean the distinction of Right and Wrong. Your opinions upon all other topics, and your feelings with regard to this world, in childhood, youth, and age, perpetually change. Your perceptions of right and wrong never change. You can dismiss the world from your mind, and almost abolish in your imagination the dominion

of sense; but you can never bury in your breast the sense of offended Justice. . . .

The mind may lose its acquaintance with other minds, and may abandon, without a sigh, this glorious universe, as a tent of the night to dwell in; but it cannot part with its moral principle, by which it becomes akin to the extraordinary intelligences that are to accompany its everlasting journey to the throne of God. If there be anything real under heaven, or in heaven, the perception of right and wrong relates to that reality. Dogmatists and philosophers may easily convince me that my mind is but the abode of many passing shadows by the belief of whose existence about me I am mocked. I shall not very sturdily combat this ancient scepticism because, to my mind and to every mind, it has often seemed problematical whether or not it was cheated by an unsubstantial edifice of thought. But it is in the constitution of the mind to rely with firmer confidence upon the *moral principle*, and I reject at once the idea of a delusion in this. This is woven vitally into the thinking substance itself, so that it cannot be diminished or destroyed without dissipating forever that spirit which it inhabited. Upon the foundation of my *moral* sense I ground my faith in the immortality of

the soul, in the existence and activity of good beings, and in the promise of rewards accommodated hereafter to the vicious or virtuous dispositions which were cultivated here. The great citizenship of the universe, which all souls partake, has *this* for its common bond and charter, which none may violate, without taking upon themselves the peril of losing its infinite privileges. Upon the bounded field of this earth, nations upon nations of men have expired in succession, and borne to other and unseen countries the minds that dwelled here for a space; and all the individuals of this host have consented together in one respect alone, namely, the acknowledgement of this inward tribunal of thought and action. They obeyed or disobeyed its law, they suffered or rejoiced, as they might; but not one ever escaped from this high, unyielding, universal thraldom which the Author of Mind has created upon the mind.

ENTHUSIASM

January 19, 1823.

The ideas of Deity and religious worship readily find admission to the mind, and are readily abused. The clown on a dunghill can exalt his capacity to these truths and is delighted and flat-

tered by this consciousness of a new and transcendent power. God is infinitely above the whole creation, and he that aspires to worship Him, feels that his mounting spirit leaves the rest of the Universe beneath his feet. Enthusiasm is therefore apt to generate in uncultivated minds a rash and ignorant contempt for the slow modes of education and the cautious arts of reasoning by which enlightened men arrive at wisdom — because they have themselves acquired this surpassing conception without the irksome toil of the intermediate steps. The boor becomes philosopher at once, and boldly issues the dogmas of a religious creed from the exuberance of a coarse imagination. The tumults of a troubled mind are mistaken for the inspiration of an apostle, and the strength of excited feelings is substituted for the dispassionate and tardy induction, the comparison of scripture and reason, which sanctions the devotions of moderate and liberal men.

This has been everywhere found to be the history of religious error; not merely in the fanaticism of sects, but in the mistakes and superstitions of individuals. Every man's heaven is different; and is coloured by the character and tone of feeling most natural to his mind. And, in like manner, his conceptions of the Divine Be-

ing will vary with the narrowness or justness of his modes of thinking. A mind which is remarkable for the truth and grandeur of its views in physical or metaphysical science will seldom be found the dupe of an unrelenting bigotry in its religious faith. . . . Intellectual habits are not the sudden productions of an accident, but are formed slowly, and confirmed from day to day by the influence of events, until they acquire an immutable strength that may outlast the period of this life. We think of God, therefore, as we think of man. Our views of human nature are liable to mistake; so are our views of the divine.

PRAYER

. . . The origin of prayer is no doubt to be traced in our comparison of finite beings with the infinite Being. To obtain bread, we prayed our neighbour to impart from his store. But to obtain more than bread,—to obtain our health or the life of a friend, to change the course of events, is beyond our neighbour's power. Man remembered in his hour of need that there was a Power above him, and uttered an ejaculation of his distress and his hopes, dictated by precisely the same emotions which moved him to address his earthly friend. Thus far the analogy

is unexceptionable, but if pursued farther it fails. A judge has decreed the death of a criminal; the father and friends of the unfortunate man come before the tribunal to pray for his life, and plead with such importunity and eloquence that the judge consents to set aside the sentence. The character of the culprit is not amended, but the free course of justice is stopped, and society wronged, by the earnestness of the supplication. (In the ancient Persian religion, it is forbidden to petition for blessings to themselves individually; the prayer must extend to the whole Persian nation.) In like manner, men came to their Maker to ask the favour of a partial event, a particular blessing that will prove prejudicial to the whole; and reasoning erroneously from human experience, they concluded that there was a certain force in prayer that would extend some controul even over the Mind of Deity. Pity and irresolution in the human judge triumphed over his knowledge and his virtue, and the worshipper flattered himself with the hope that even God might be induced to hesitate by the offering of hecatombs and clamorous petition. The idolatry of every nation has had a tendency towards this belief, that the arm of omnipotence could be

chained down by sacrifice and entreaty, which the Hindoo mythology has pursued to extravagant lengths. Prayer and penance by their intrinsic virtue will raise the worshipper above the power of gods and men, until it hurls the Highest from his throne to make room for the devout usurper. Such a creed shocks the mind; but a secret bias to this belief is by no means uncommon in Christian countries. We are prone to think that the prayers of righteous men avail with God to check or change the course of events, which implies either that those events were ill-ordered before, or that they will take a wrong direction now; but both these hypotheses are inconsistent with our trust in the superintendence of Providence over human affairs. . . .

The opposition of a General to a Particular Providence is often implied in prayer. Antiquity viewed the gods as the Particular, Fate as the General Providence, and reconciles them by making Fate absolute in the administration of the Universe. Our perplexity springs from the union of both in the hands of One God.

. . . When God has ordained a change of events and the aspect of the world, suggesting the benefits of such a change to the mind, in-

duces man to pray for it, in this case, the event coincides with the prayer, and is interpreted as an especial interposition. With this solitary exception, men's prayers and the succession of events have no direct connexion at all with each other. . . .

Human curiosity is forever engaged in seeking out ways and means of making a connection between the mind and the world of matter without, or the world of mind that has subsisted here, or an uniting bridge which shall join to future ages our own memory and deeds. This laudable curiosity should not neglect the formation of a bond which proposes to unite it, not to men, to matter, or to beasts, but to the Unseen Spirit of the Universe. Our native delight in the intercourse of other beings urges us to cultivate with assiduity the friendship of great minds. But there is a Mind to whom all their greatness is vanity and nothing; who did himself create and communicate all the intellect that exists; and there is a mode of intercourse provided by which we can approach this excellent majesty. That Mind is God; and that Mode is Prayer.

"And if by prayer
Incessant I could hope to change the will

Of Him who all things can, I would not cease
To weary Him with my assiduous cries.
But prayer against his absolute decree
No more avails than breath against the wind
Blown stifling back on him that breathes it forth."

Paradise Lost, Book XI.

HISTORY

In reading History it is hard to keep the eye steadily fixed upon any distinct moral view of the species, to which we may readily refer all the facts recorded of individuals. When we lay aside the book, and think of man, our habitual theories regard him as a being in a state of probation, and we elevate the whole human race to an exalted equality of condition and destiny. Resume the page, and you are convinced at once, that whatever opinions you are yourself pleased to entertain concerning them,—it never entered the minds of the majority of mankind in past ages that any such equality prevailed, or that they sustained any very sublime rank in the scale of creation. They have themselves shewn a melancholy apathy (that is madness in the eye of a philanthropist) to every supposed nobleness of moral or intellectual design; they—that is the majority—have uniformly preferred

the body to the mind, have permitted the free and excessive enjoyment of their sensual appetites, and chained down in torpid dreams the noble appetites of the soul. Instead of eating to live, men have lived to eat, to drink, and to be merry; and when ordinary means failed to bring about these grand purposes, then the extraordinary means of lies, murder and robbery have been resorted to. No doubt good men are also found in the dramatic variety of the tale, to recall the mind to the theory from which it has wandered; but a good man in the world is aptly represented by a stag in the chase, as the one mark and victim at whose cost the enjoyment of all the rest is procured. . . . It seems to be a mockery to send us to this howling wilderness to pluck roses and fruits. The rose is blooming there and the wild flowers hanging luxuriantly, but they cast their perfume in the tiger's den. Fanciful men, heated by the new wine of their imaginations, have attempted to woo the indignant Reason into a better love of this darkened world; Epicurean pencils have painted it as perfectly accommodated to our powers of enjoyment, as fraught with every luxury, grace and good which we desire to gain, as the palace of beauty and love, the vast mart of thought, friendship, so-

ciety and distinction, the home of Virtue and the End of Hope. So it is pictured, and so we believe in childhood; but our first mature glance at the actual state of society falls upon so much real deformity and such low moral and intellectual turpitude that the fair fabric of the imagination is speedily undermined. We find it difficult or impossible to reconcile the phenomena which we observe with any plausible hypotheses that heaven or earth have told us of their design; but humanity always resembles itself, and we readily recognize the imposture that attempts to describe better beings than men. For this more brilliant and seductive faith concerning man and the earth is deduced from false and partial representations of human nature, and makes only momentary converts when it is aided by the gay exhilaration which nature within and without awakens in youth, or by the few hours or moments that happen in a man's life, when the heart is swelled and imagination is feasted at seasons of revel, magnificence and public joy. Whereas the times when the contrary conviction is forced upon the soul, outnumber these moments a thousand fold. . . .

HISTORY (*continued*)

The history of America since the Revolution is meagre because it has been all that time under better government, better circumstances of religious, moral, political, commercial prosperity than any nation ever was before. History will continually grow less interesting as the world grows better. Professor Playfair of Edinburgh, the greatest, or one of the greatest men of his time, died without a biography, for there was no incident in the life of a great and good man worth recording. Nelson and Bonaparte, men of abilities without principles, found four or five biographies apiece.

The true epochs of history should be those successive triumphs which, age after age, the communities of men have achieved, such as the Reformation, the Revival of letters, the progressive Abolition of the slave-trade.

. . . . . .

Whoever considers what kind of a spirit it is which prompts men to write, will remark the improbability that a knowledge of the domestic manners of an ancient people should be transmitted to a remote age, by any but the most fortuitous event. Literature grew out of the

necessity of written monuments, and in its first expansion into an elegant art, while yet its mechanical advantages were rude and poor, it was devoted only to those great features on the face of the world which first forced themselves on the mind of the writer, — to the history of laws, of colonies, of wars, and of religion. For his illustrations, the writer appealed to nature, and upon the early discovery of the delight given by these appeals, was formed a new department of the Art which was called poetry.

. . . . . .

DOMESTIC MANNERS

. . . If we had a series of faithful portraits of private life in Egypt, Assyria, Greece and Rome, we might relinquish without a sigh their national annals. The great passions which move a whole nation, and the common sense of mankind, are alike everywhere, and these determine the foreign relations and the political counsels of men. But private life hath more delicate varieties, which differ in unlike circumstances; . . .

. . . Our vague and pompous outlines of history serve but to define in geographical and chronological limits, the faint vestiges we possess of former nations. But of what mighty mo-

ment is it that we know the precise scene of a Virtue or a Vice? Give us the bare narrative of the *moral* beings engaged, the *moral* feelings concerned, and the result—and you have answered all our purpose, all the ultimate design which leads the mind to explore the past. (That is of a speculative mind—apart from all purposes of government and policy—for the purposes of another world, rather than for this.) For the history of nations is but the history of private Virtues and Vices collected in a more splendid field, a wider sky. To little purpose you would shew the curious philosopher a mighty forest, extending at a distance its thousand majestic trees; a single branch, a stem, a leaf, in his hand is of more value to him for all the purposes of science. Even the Eternal Geometer, in the fancy of Leibnitz, deduces the past and present condition of the Universe from the examination of the single atom.

SOLITUDE

The gods and wild beasts are both, to a proverb, fond of solitude; thought makes the difference between the solitude of the god and that of the lion.

[IMAGINATION *versus* THOUGHT]

In the entry of the saloon there has been considerable bustle; but an individual now stood there to throw off his blue cloak, whose figure arrested at once the whole attention of two or three guests who chanced to be looking towards the door. A whisper instantly circulated to inform the party of the presence of a most distinguished and welcome guest. Every one rose at his entrance, and the stranger advanced with an air of dignified majesty towards the centre of the hall. Franklin saluted him with evident respect and introduced him to the company as the first American President. There was no brilliant sparkle in his eye which attracted notice, nor rapid change of expression in his countenance; his countenance was composed and a graceful dignity marked every motion, so that he was rather the Jupiter than the Apollo of the group. This however was manifest, that from the time of his entrance, during all that long conference, the first place in that society was invariably, and of right, as it seemed, conceded to him. A most melodious voice which rolled richly on the ear and was that of Cicero, addressed the last mentioned person. "I esteem myself happy to stand in the company of one to

whom Heaven seems to have united me by a certain similarity of fortune and the common glory of saving a state. But the fates have given you an advantage, O most illustrious man, above my lot, in granting you an honourable decline and death amid the regrets of your country, while I fell by the vengeance of the flagitious Antony." Gibbon put up his lip at this speech; and Franklin, who sat with his hands upon his knees between Washington and Gibbon, &c. &c.[1]

"Tush!" he said, "thoughts and imaginations! I tell thee, man, that I, who have got my bread and fame by informing the world, can write, in twenty lines, all the *thoughts* that ever I had, while the imaginations would fill a thousand fair pages."

[ANIMALS]

March 6, 1823.

My brother Edward asks me, Whether I have a right to make use of animals? I answer "Yes," and shall attempt to give my reasons. A poor native of Lapland found himself in midwinter destitute of food, of clothing and

1 The author evidently postponed to another day telling what Franklin's remark or gesture was, in his eagerness to give Gibbon the floor.

light, and without even a bow to defend himself from the beasts. In this perplexity he met with a reindeer, which he killed and conveyed to his hut. He now found himself supplied with oil to light his lamp, with a warm covering for his body and with wholesome and strengthening food, and with bowstrings withal, whereby he could again procure a similar supply. Does any mind question the innocence of this starving wretch in thus giving life and comfort to a desolate family in that polar corner of the world? . . .Now there is a whole *nation* of men precisely in this condition, all reduced to the alternative of killing the beasts, or perishing themselves. Let the tender-hearted advocate of the brute creation go there, and choose whether he would make the beasts *his* food, or be himself *theirs*. . . .

[BODY AND SOUL]

March 10.

The mixture of the body and soul is the great wonder in the world, and our familiarity with this puts us at ease with all that is unaccountable in our condition. Providence, no doubt, scrupulously observes the proportions of this mixture, and requires for the soundness

of both, a fixed equilibrium. The gross appetites of the body are sometimes indulged until the mind by long disuse loses the command of her noble faculties, and one after another, star after star, they are gradually extinguished. Those passages and conduits of thought, of divine construction, through which God intended that the streams of intellect should flow in various directions, — because they have never been used, have fallen to ruin, and are choked up; Mind, from being the free born citizen of the Universe and the inheritor of glory, has become the caterer and the pander of sense. Even the body, from being the upright lord of the lower creation and the temperate owner of a thousand pleasures, has abused his liberties, until he is the slave of those pleasures, and the imitator and peer of the beasts. This is one mode of destroying the balance that Nature fixed in our compound frame. . . .

Ascetic mortification and an unintermitting, livelong martyrdom of all the sensual appetites, although far more innocent than the contrary extreme, is nevertheless unwise, because it fails of its intended effect. Hermits, who believed that by this merciless crucifixion of the lusts of the body they should succeed in giving to the

winds the rags and tatters of a corrupt nature, and elevate and purge the soul in exact proportion to the sufferings of the flesh, have been disappointed in their hopes; at least, if they have succeeded in deceiving themselves, they have grievously disappointed the world.[1] . . .

But these golden dreams of a rapid amelioration of the world to issue from the prayers and penances that stormed heaven from these solitudes, vanished away. The solitary man was as other men are. His sufferings had soured his temper, or inflamed his pride; the current of thought had been checked and frozen. His powers and dispositions were diverted from useful ends and were barren and selfish. Instead of the blessed plant which they thought had sprung for the healing of the nations, was a dry and withered branch; it was sundered from its root; producing neither blossoms, nor leaves, nor fruits, 't was fit only for the fire.

March 12.

. . . But there was an elder scripture, a prior command; Love thy neighbor; amid your righteous war against your passions, forget not that you are a man; that you are one individual of a

1 Here follows a long passage on the hermits of the Thebaid and their temporary repute for their sacrifices.

great and immortal company, who, with you, are labouring on to attainment of objects which demand all and more than all their faculties to appreciate and reach; that thousands of these are fainting or falling by the way, and will task your utmost benevolence to lend them needful aid. And when a man has duly considered, . . . I think he will be led to undervalue the precious qualities of that man's virtue who, like the priest and the Levite of the parable, goes on the other side and extricates himself as he can from the importunity of want or the cries of the dying. . . . The earth which supports him upon her bosom, the common mother of us all, has a right to ask at his hands some return for her bounties, and what immunity it is entitles him to nurse his own unprofitable existence, without putting his shoulder to the wheel or bearing his part of the burden of life; without giving help to the weary or pouring one drop of balm into the wounded heart.

. . . . . .

I am persuaded that God enforces the law . . . to make the perfection of man's nature consist in a fixed equilibrium of the body and the mind. Those masters of the moral world, who have preserved an undisputed lordship over

good minds for ages after they themselves have died, have not gained that rare fortune by any extraordinary manners of life, or any unseemly defiance of the elements, or of death. Temperate, unassuming men, they have conformed to the fashions of the times in which they fell, without effort or contempt. God, in their minds, removed the ancient landmarks of thought, or else gave them strength to overleap the boundary, so that they took in a mightier vision of the state of man than their fellows had done. In all this they did not see *differently* from them, but *saw beyond* the common limit. Accordingly it was no part of their pride to be at discord with men upon common matters of every day's observation. Upon trifles of time and sense they all thought alike. Deeper thoughts and remote consequences, far beyond the ken of vulgar judgments, and yet intimately connected with the progress and destinies of society, were the points they fixed their eyes upon; and upon the distinctness with which they were able to detect these, they chiefly valued themselves. It is a delightful relief in the afflicting history of the world, it is a crystal fountain gushing in the wilderness — to remember the men who exercised this peaceful and sublime dominion over human hearts not

cemented by the blood nor shaken by the curses of enemies. Bound like other men to the complicated machine of society, and their fortunes perhaps inseparably linked to the greatness of another house — these minds quietly founded a kingdom of their own, which should long outlast the ruins of that transient dynasty in which it grew. . . . Men of God they were, — children of a clearer day, walking upon earth, keeping in their hands the urns of immortality out of which there streamed a light which reached to far distant generations that they might follow in their track. The Pagan also blest them,

"Pauci quos aequus amavit
Juppiter, aut ardens virtus ad sidera tollit."

March 13.

And what a motley patchwork of feelings may be found in the crew of their admirers behind them. How many brows are knit, how many hearts yearn, of those who resolve to follow, or are content to worship them! Upon what meat did these Cæsars feed, that they have grown so great? Did God or Man, time, or place, or chance, sow the immortal seed? And how many seats at the Table of the Gods are yet vacant? And the storehouses of genius and goodness from

which each child of the Universe may pluck out his share—are they yet exhausted or locked up? And shall those hearts which have throbbed to the secret urgency of the spirit, (perchance it was the same spirit that urges all existence) shall they faint in the outset? Onward, onward, the Sun is already high over your head! Or fearest thou because the day is waxed late that time shall lack? I tell thee, the race is for Eternity. The windows of heaven are opened, and they whose faces are as the day, Seraphim and Cherubim, beckon to the children of Man and bid him "Be bold!"

"Incipe. Vivendi qui recte prorogat horam,
Rusticus expectat dum defluat amnis; at ille
Labitur et labetur in omne volubilis aevum."

JOURNAL XI

THE WIDE WORLD, No. 10

"Optimus ille fuit vindex laedentia pectus
Vincula qui rupit, dedoluitque semel." [1]

[During the period which this Wide World covers, perhaps in May, Mrs. Emerson and her sons moved to Canterbury, a part of Roxbury, where they hired a house in the picturesque region near the Dedham Turnpike, now a portion of Franklin Park. Waldo's health as reflected in portions of this journal, especially the poem "The Bell," seems not to have been good. There is a pleasant letter about the joy he felt in dwelling in the country, written to one of his classmates, in Mr. Cabot's Memoirs, vol. i, p. 96.]

DEDICATION

Boston, *March* 18, 1823.

When God had made the beasts, and prepared to set over them an intelligent lord, He considered what external faculty he should add to his frame, to be the seat of his superiority. Then He gave him an articulate voice. He gave him

1 From Ovid's *Remedia Amoris* (corrected).

an organ exquisitely endowed, which was independent of his grosser parts,—but the minister of his mind and the interpreter of its thoughts. It was designed moreover as a sceptre of irresistible command, by whose force the great and wise should still the tumult of the vulgar million, and direct their blind energies to a right operation. The will of Heaven was done, and the morning and evening gales wafted to the Highest the harmonious accents of Man. But the generations of men lived and died, while yet their expanding powers were constrained by the iron necessities of infant civilization, and they had never, with, perchance, a few solitary exceptions, ascertained the richness of this divine gift. Suddenly, in a corner of Europe, the ripe seeds of Greatness burst into life, and covered the hills and valleys of Greece with the golden harvest. The new capacities and desires which burned in the human breast, demanded a correspondent perfection in speech, — to body them forth. Then a voice was heard in the assemblies of men, which sounded like the language of the gods; it rolled like music on the ear, and filled the mind with indefinable longings; it was peremptory as the word of kings; or mournful as a widow wailing; or enkindling as the martial

clarion. That voice men called Eloquence, and he that had it unlocked their hearts, or turned their actions whithersoever he would. Like sea-waves to the shore, like mountain sheep to their shepherd, so men crowded around this commander of their hearts to drink in his accents, and to mould their passions to his will. The contagion of new desires and improvements went abroad, — and tribe after tribe of barbarians uplifted the banner of Refinement. This spirit-stirring art was propagated also, and although its light sunk often in the socket, it was never put out. Time rolled, and successive ages rapidly developed the mixed and mighty drama of human society, and among the instruments employed therein, this splendid art was often and actively used. And who that has witnessed its strength, and opened every chamber of his soul to the matchless enchanter, does not venerate it as the noblest agent that God works with in human hearts? My Muse, it is the idol of thy homage, and deserves the dedication of thine outpourings.

TIME

After two moons I shall have fulfilled twenty years. Amid the fleeting generations of the human race and in the abyss of years I lift my solitary

voice unheeded and unknown, and complain unto inexorable Time: — "Stop, Destroyer, overwhelmer, stop one brief moment this uncontrollable career. Ravisher of the creation, suffer me a little space, that I may pluck some spoils, as I pass onward, to be the fruits and monuments of the scenes through which I have travelled." Fool! you implore the deaf torrent to relax the speed of its cataract,

"At ille
Labitur et labetur in omne volubilis aevum."

How many thousands before, have cast up to Time the same look of fear and sorrow when they have contemplated the terrible flight of Time. But this infinite Extinguisher or Changer of being continues his supreme agency without exception or interval. Among the undistinguished myriads thus hurried on and off the stage of mortal life, a few, parted by long periods asunder, have made themselves a longer memory in this world, (and perchance in worlds beyond,) by pouring out all their strength in the service of their fellow men. They rightly judged that if a benevolent God keeps watch in heaven over his family in earth, the sight would be grateful to Him of patient study and intense toil accomplished by magnanimous minds in behalf of human nature and for

the avowed design of its improvement. Men grope, they said, in a night of doubts and falsehoods, for the light of Truth is quenched, or burns dimly in the midst; come, let us restore the flame, and feed it with fuel, until it shall grow up again in a beacon-light blazing broadly and gloriously to illuminate the world. Then our sons and our sons' sons shall walk in the brilliant light and shall pray God to bless us long after we have gone down to the chambers of death. That glorious company of martyrs who took up the cross of virtuous denial and gave their days and nights to study, meditation and prayer, were indeed "*Blessed*" of Heaven and earth. God, in the watches of the starry night, fed their imaginations with secret influences of divinity, and swelled their conceptions with showers of healing water from the fountains of Paradise. They could not contain their joy of these sweet and silent promptings,— this interview as they deemed it, between God and man,—and they mounted to a constant elevation of thought which left far below them the cankering and ignoble pursuits of life. They have left inscribed in their writings frequent and bold appeals to the grandeur of the spirit which lodged in their breasts, confident that what was writ would justify the truth of their claims. The

sublimest bard of all — he who sung "Man's disobedience, and the fruit of that forbidden tree which brought death into the world and all our woe" — felt himself continually summoned and inspired by a Spirit within him, and which afterward, he says, grew daily upon me — to do God's work in the world by sending forth strains which after-times would not willingly let die. Not a work to be finished in the heat of youth or the vapours of wine; nor yet by invocation of Dame Memory and her siren daughters, but by devout prayer to that eternal Spirit who giveth knowledge; hereby he hoped to release in some great measure the hearts of posterity from that harlotry of voluptuousness, whereinto he perceived with grief his own age had fallen. A kindred genius born for the exaltation of mankind, who preceded the poet, and who fell (alas for humanity!) into a snare and ruin for his integrity, did yet contribute a mighty impulse to the cause of wisdom and truth. And he also was no wise unconscious of the magnitude of the effort and the power which supported him.

THE BELL[1]

I love thy music, mellow bell,
I love thine iron chime,
To life or death, to heaven or hell,
Which calls the Sons of Time.

Thy voice upon the deep
The homebound sea-boy hails,
It charms his cares to sleep,
It cheers him as he sails.

To merry hall or house of God
Thy summons called our sires,
And good men thought thy awful voice
Disarmed the thunder's fires.

And soon thy music, sad Death-bell,
Shall sing its dirge once more,
And mix my requiem with the gale
Which sweeps my native shore.

FREE THINKING

It is often alleged, with a great mass of instances to support the assertion, that the spirit of philosophy and a liberal mind is at discord

1 These youthful verses, slightly changed for the better by Mr. Emerson a few years later, were printed in the Appendix to the Centenary Edition of the *Poems*.

with the principles of religion, so far, at least, as to imply that hoary error that religion is a prejudice which statesmen cherish in the vulgar as a wholesome terror. Those whom Genius or Education have rescued from the common ignorance have openly discarded the humble creeds of men and vaunted their liberty: they have mounted, it is pretended, to some loftier prospect of man's dependence or independence upon God, and have discovered that human beings foolishly trouble themselves by their shallow and slavish fear of some great Power in the Universe who notices and remembers their actions. For these clearer-sighted intellects have darted their glance into the secrets of the other world, and have satisfied themselves, either that there is no Divinity at all, beyond the vain names and fantastic superstitions of men, or else, if there *be* a sphered and potent Dweller in the Abyss, he is incurious and indifferent to the petty changes of the world. In this confidence, therefore, these bold speculators cast off the fetters of opinion and those apprehensions which so cleave to our poor nature, and are willing to survey at ease the gorgeous spectacle of the Universe, the fabric of society, and the closet of the Mind; and to make themselves

proud of this birthright of thoughts — this rare chance — which fell upon them, they know not how; and even to vaunt of their incomprehensible immortality, if perchance they shall outlast the changes of death. This perilous recklessness, I find with regret in many of the intellectual Guides of these latter times. . . . Hume, Gibbon, Robertson, Franklin, certain Scotch geniuses of the present day, and the profligate Byron have expressed more or less explicitly their dissent from the popular faith. Composing in themselves a brilliant constellation of minds variously and richly endowed, they have taken out its welcome influence from the cause of good will to men, and set it in the opposite scale. Like the star seen in the Apocalypse, they have cast a malign light upon the earth, turning the sweet waters to bitter.

That there may be a transient pleasure in such free thinking I will not deny, nor that pride of opinion has its gratifications. I will not dispute that to a man inclined so to consider it, the majesty of nature is a puppet-show of rarest entertainment, abounding with devices which will repay the toil of his curiosity. I will not deny that this disciple of Democritus may find the human soul and human society rich sources of

merriment; but I shall say that laughter in the mouth of a maniac is, in my judgment, as becoming. Standing, as man stands, with the thunders of evil fate suspended over him, bound on every side by the cords of temptation, and uncertainty sweeping like a dark cloud before his path,—is it for him, if his understanding is strong enough to appreciate this condition, to acknowledge his melancholy lot by unseasonable mirth? A sober firmness on his brow, and purity in his heart, is the best armour he can wear. I believe nothing is more ungrounded than the assertion, that scepticism is, in any manner, the natural fruit of a superior understanding. The legitimate fruits of a master spirit are a dearer love to virtue, and an ardent and thrilling desire to burst the bonds of the flesh and begin a perfecter existence. In those moments which every wise man counts the best of his life — who hath not been smitten, with a burning curiosity, to rend asunder the veil of mortality, and gaze, with pious violence, upon the unutterable glories beyond? The names which I mentioned as apostate weigh nothing against the greater names of Bacon, Milton, Newton, and the like, whose hearts cleaved to the divine revelations as the pledge of their resurrection to eternity. Nor can

I conceive of any man of sense reading the chapter of Milton . . . [*Reason of Church Government urged against Prelaty*, Book 2, c. 1] without his heart warming to the touch of noble sentiments; and his faith in God and in the eternity of virtue and of truth being steadfastly confirmed. Nothing of human composition is so akin to inspiration.

. . . . . .

Sunday Evening, *March* 23, 1823.

. . . One youth among the multitudes of mankind, one grain of sand on the seashore, unknown in the midst of my contemporaries, I am hastening to put on the manly robe. From childhood the names of the great have ever resounded in my ear, and it is impossible that I should be indifferent to the rank which I must take in the innumerable assembly of men, or that I should shut my eyes upon the huge interval which separates me from the minds which I am wont to venerate. Every young man is prone to be misled by the suggestions of his own ill-founded ambition, which he mistakes for the promptings of a secret Genius. . . . It is not Time, nor Fate, nor the World, that is half so much his foe as the demon Indolence within him. A man's

enemies are those of his own household. But if a man shall diligently consider what it is which most forcibly impedes the natural greatness of his mind, he will assuredly find that slothful, sensual indulgence is the real unbroken barrier, and that when he has overleaped this, God has set no bounds to his progress. The maxim is true to an indefinite extent, "*Faber quisque fortunae suae.*" We boast of our free agency. What is this but to say, God has put into our hands the elements of our character, the iron and the brass, the silver and the gold, to choose and to fashion them as we will. But we are afraid of the toil, we bury them in a napkin, instead of moulding them into rich and enduring vessels. This view is by far the most animating to exertion. It speaks life and courage to the soul. Mistrust no more your ability, the rivalry of others, or the final event. Make speed to plan, to execute, to fulfil; forfeit not one moment more in the dalliance of sloth; for the work is vast, the time is short, and opportunity is a headlong thing which tarries for no man's necessities. Habits of labour are paths to heaven. — It commands no outward austerities. Do not put ashes on your head, nor sackcloth on your loins, nor a belt of iron for your girdle. But mortify *the mind*,

put on humility and temperance, for ashes, and bind about the soul as with iron. The soul is a fertile soil, which will grow rank and to waste, if left to itself. If you wish, therefore, to see it bud out abundantly and bring an harvest richer an hundred and a thousand fold, bind it, bind it with the restraint of cultivation.

March 26.

It is overgrown with tares and poisons. Suffer no longer this noisesome barrenness. Harrow it up with thoughts. Fill it with the joys and wholesome apprehensions of a reasonable being, instead of the indifference of a brute.

. . . . . .

March 28.

These are the clamours with which conscience pursues and upbraids me — happy if they were undeserved — happiest could they accomplish their end! But the inscrutable future comes down in darkness and finds us in the thrall of the same old enemies, with all our hopes and full-blown intentions thick on our heads. For your life, then, for your life! crawl on a few steps farther in the next twelvemonth!

A SHOUT TO THE SHEPHERDS

Freshly, gaily, the rivulet flows
Beside its emerald bank,
Each silver bubble in beauty goes
Adown the stream and briefly glows
Till it reach the broad flags and the alders dank.

Shepherds, who love the lay
Of untaught bards in oaken shades,
Bright-eyed Apollos of the forest glades,
Hither, hither, turn your way.
Come to the grassy border of the brook,
Here, where the ragged hawthorn dips
His prickly buds of perfume in the wave,
And thence again a costly fragrance sips,
Drinking with each balmy floweret's lips
Pure from the Naiad's welling urn,
While overhead the embowering elms
Bow their broad branches and keep out the day.
Hither, hither, turn your way.

[AMERICA A FIELD FOR WORK]

April 8, 1823.

Powerful and concentrated motive . . . is necessary to a man, who would be great; and young men whose hearts burn with the desire of distinction may complain perhaps that the paths in which a man may be usefully illustrious are

already taken up, and that they have fallen in too late an age to be benefactors of mankind. Truly I wish it were so. . . .

Alas! The wildest dreams of poetry have uttered no such thing. There *is* a huge and disproportionate abundance of *evil* on earth. Indeed the good that is here is but a little island of light amidst the unbounded ocean. What mind therefore (that is stirred by ardent feelings) looks over the great desart of human life without fervently resolving to embark in the cause of God and man, and without finding puissant motives calling out the strength of every root and fibre of his soul? But he finds the field too spacious and the motive not enough concentrated. . . . Let the young American withdraw his eyes from all but his own country, and try if he can find employment there. . . . Separated from the contamination which infects all other civilized lands, this country has always boasted a great comparative purity. At the same time, from obvious causes, it has leaped at once from infancy to manhood; has covered, and is covering, millions of square miles with a hardy and enterprizing population. The free institutions which prevail here, and here alone, have attracted to this country the eyes of the world. In

this age the despots of Europe are engaged in the common cause of tightening the bonds of monarchy about the thriving liberties and laws of men; and the unprivileged orders, the bulk of human society, gasping for breath beneath their chains, and darting impatient glances towards the free constitution of other countries. To America, therefore, monarchs look with apprehension, and the people with hope. But the vast rapidity with which the desarts and forests of the interior of this country are peopled have led patriots to fear lest the nation grow *too fast* for its virtue and its peace. In the raw multitudes who lead the front of emigration, men of respectability in mind and morals are rarely found — it is well known. The pioneers are commonly the off-scouring of civilized society, who have been led to embark in these enterprizes by the consciousness of ruined fortunes or ruined character, or perchance a desire for that greater license which belongs to a new and unsettled community. These men and their descendants compose the western frontier population of the United States and are rapidly expanding themselves. At this day, the axe is laid to the root of the forest; the Indian is driven from his hut, and the bison from the plains;—

in the bosom of mountains where white men never trod, already the voice of nations begins to be heard — haply heard in ominous and evil accents. Good men desire, and the great cause of human nature demands that this abundant and overflowing richness wherewith God has blessed this country be not misapplied and made a curse of; that this new storehouse of nations shall never pour out upon the world an accursed tribe of barbarous robbers. Now the danger is very great that the Machine of Government acting upon this territory at so great distance will wax feeble, or meet with resistance, and that the oracles of moral law and intellectual wisdom, in the midst of an ignorant and licentious people, will speak faintly and indistinctly. Human foresight can set no bounds to the ill consequences of such a calamity, if it is not reasonably averted. And, on the contrary, if the senates that shall meet hereafter in those wilds shall be made to speak a voice of wisdom and virtue, the reformation of the world would be to be expected from America. How to effect the check proposed is an object of momentous importance. And in view of an object of such magnitude, I know not who he is, that can complain that motive is lacking in this latter age, whereby men should become great. . . .

COMPENSATION

The balancing and adjustment of human pleasures, privileges and graces, so that no man's share shall outrun all competition, nor be diminished to an extreme poverty, is so obvious in the world, as to be a daily topic of conversation. And the system of compensations takes place as much in the *difference of good*, as in the apportioning of evil and good. Thus knowledge is a good; but it must be acquired in different ways, and there is no single way which combines the advantages of all the others. The advantages which one man enjoys by access to unusual sources of improvement do, by some necessity, deprive him of admittance to other sources equally rare and rich. Is he opulent, and commands the privileges of libraries and schools? he wants that vigour and eagerness to use them which *Necessity* gives. Is he a traveller and borne by the winds to every foreign clime, and does he transact affairs amidst the famous ruins of each continent? — then his taste has been uncultivated and he views them all with indifference. Has he wit and industry sufficient to grasp all knowledge? — poverty shuts up with iron bars every avenue to him. Men are alike only in

infancy; afterwards every man takes a path which leads out from the common centre, and every step separates him further from all the rest. . . .

MORAL OBLIGATION

. . . . . .

To what purpose is this gorgeous firmament displayed, in such rich and inimitable colours, with such glorious variety? What is this curtain of darkness which is hung abroad, unaltered in its regularity, unrivalled in its grandeur? I stand in a Paradise. And the pleasant winds of heaven fan me as they move, and scatter health and odours through all their outgoings. Custom has made familiar to me the marvels of the world; nevertheless its mighty magnificence will sometimes break upon the sense in overpowering sensations, and fill the mind with unspeakable conceptions of the Cause and Design, and with awful shame for its own ingratitude. But men are much more apt to let their thoughts rest in the works, to behold Nature without anxiety to see Nature's God; it is Custom, the tyranness of fools, that suffers them to gaze vacantly upon this fair and noble miracle, this sublime and exquisite world, without exacting an unbounded homage to the Author of it all. But perchance

Custom is right, and I owe no homage; stand forth now and shew, if thou canst, some grounds for this superlative claim upon my affections and life. For, if you say well, then I am checked in that liberty which I have exercised and (in the full view of my whole hopes) I shall be free to do right, but I shall no longer be free to do wrong. For he that is bid to go one way, and a sword is pointed to his breast, is not free to go another. Explain to me, then, my obligations, for else I cannot consent to resign that free and entire license to go right or to go wrong with which I hitherto believed I walked in the world's ways. (*Infra*, quote 6, 7, 8 verses, xxxv Job.)[1]

First, then, you are not your own, but belong to another by the right of Creation. This claim is the most simple, perfect and absolute of all claims. Nothing is akin to it in the universe; we cannot reason about it from analogy; but when we think of it, it is the most reasonable and satisfactory of all claims. God animated a clod with

1 "If thou sinnest, what doest thou against him? or if thy transgressions be multiplied, what doest thou unto him?

"If thou be righteous, what givest thou him, or what receiveth he of thine hand?

"Thy wickedness may hurt a man as thou art; and thy righteousness may profit the son of man."

life in a corner of his dominions; by his own power he first orders it to be,—to hold a passive existence as a clod, out of nothing; then, he breathes into it life—and thus from an imparting of Omnific Virtue, a thing is, which was not; having come from himself, it is a part of himself; it takes the tone of existence from him alone; can aught be said to be so absolutely, inevitably, unchangeably God's?[1] . . .

If we conceive the Divine Being inflicting pain upon these creatures, we cannot satisfy ourselves that even persecution authorises their rebellion against his will. For, he has as close and near an interest in what he makes from himself as that which he makes has for itself; and for him to pain such a creature is to pain himself. . . . We cannot reason here from analogy, for men are not creators. . . . If a father abuses his child, forgets the ties of nature, and encroaches upon his human rights or seeks his life—the son is not left without resource—he can renounce those mutual claims which his sire has refused to re-

1 "A man . . . is there to speak for truth; but who is he? Some clod the truth has snatched from the ground and with fire has fashioned to a momentary man. Without the truth he is a clod again." — "The Sovereignty of Ethics," *Lectures and Biographical Sketches*, p. 194.

spect, and divesting himself of all other support can sustain himself on the simple grounds of natural rights. . . . But the case is radically different with the creature of God, and with a son of man. For the former has no ultimate and primal rights to throw himself back upon, when he is induced to renounce his submission to God; for God is his Maker and made those very rights which he possesses. There is no other being in the abysses of existence who might erect a hostile standard against the Throne of the Deity that afflicts him, about which the disaffected might rally and hope. There is no other separate, ultimate resource, for God is within him, God about him, he is a part of God himself. Nothing therefore can destroy, nothing abridge, the claim of obedience which a Creator advances upon his creatures. Hence, the first ground of moral obligation is this; that the Being who ordained it is the Source, the Support and the Principle of our existence, and it were a kind of denying our Nature to reject that which is agreeable to him.

. . . There is no waste, no period to the Moral universe. An antiquity that is without beginning, and a futurity that is without end, is its history. A principle of life and truth in itself

which it is impossible to conceive of as liable to death or suspension, or as less than infinite in the extent of its rule, binding God and man in its irreversible decree, — is coexistent with Deity. . . .

[DRAMATIC FRAGMENT]

Cawba. When will the plague depart? Will all my sons
Snuff death from the wild wind, and go away
To the dim land of spirits o'er the hills?

Seer. The bisons fed in safety in the valley
Until thy sire set up his wigwam here;
Now they are gone to see the setting sun.
Thy people dwelt in safety in this land,
But they must flee to see the setting sun.
Come let them now dig down the tree of peace,
Cut reeds from rivers for their poisoned shafts,
Pluck up keen flintstones for their tomahawks,
And battle with the thunder gods of heaven.
Hear the bald eagle scream amid the clouds;
His voice betokens blood, his eye glares bright
O'er the great Waters to the misty isles.
Out of the clouds Big Warriors shall come
In swift canoes that fly on shining wings; —

I see them leap like giants on thy shore
With thunder in their hands, and thy Great Spirit
Is frighted at their Gods, and leaves his skies.
I tell thee, Chieftain, that the coward gods
Fear the white tribe that ride across the deep.
And hide their shamed heads. Ah, Red Men are few;
They are few and feeble, and the eagle tribes
Must crumble fast away and fall in pieces.

Mas. You sing the deathsong of my tribe. Ah me!
Now by my father's soul, old Cawba, say
Why are the tall warriors weak? and why does God
Suffer the wolves to lap his children's blood?
Does the Great Spirit betray, or does he fear?

Seer. Eagle! He loves his children; feeds them when
They famish, saves them in the winter's storm,
And sends the pleasant summer full of joy
Fattening the forest families — for them.
Then see thou blame Him not, for He is good.

Mas. Sometimes he darts his thunder at my sons;
Can he not kill my enemies?

Seer. There are gods
Besides thy God, as other tribes have chiefs

Besides thy own. Eagle, thy God is weak,
Waxing and waning like yon horned moon;
The white man's God, eternal as the sun.

Mas. Out on your God! I 'll be my people's god.
Since the Great Spirit is afraid to fight,
They shall not lack an arm strong as his arm.
And when the white canoes come o'er the sea,
Oh may their God with me wrestle for life!
Then I will fall upon them like the night,
And sing my war-song in their ears, and kill,
And stain the water-side with crimson foam.
And if my warriors fall, and if the foe
Prevail — then I will die, as the Eagle Chief
Should die — in fight, last of a noble tribe,
And white men's dying groans shall lull my last sleep.

[MORALS, *continued*]

June 1, 1823.

Great force is given to morals if you consider the object and integrity they contribute to human life. They are strong; if they were weak, and but a faint hint, or indeed no suggestion at all, of this law were imparted to the mind, life, instead of being a noble and harmonious order, would immediately become a wild and terrible dream.

Men would ask one of another the cause and meaning of the unexplained enigma. To what purpose stand we here? Shall a tremendous event shut up this troubled scene? These tempestuous passions of ours — come, let us gratify them, though we slay each other and ourselves also, to avoid some darker calamity that uncertain existence may be storing for us. A Chaos more frightful than that of nature — the Chaos of thought — would make life an insupportable curse. The intelligent universe would be deprived of the salutary restraint that supports and prolongs its awful beauty. Rend away the darkness, and restore to man the knowledge of this principle, and you have lit the sun over the world and solved the riddle of life. Now man lives for a purpose. Hitherto was no object upon which to concentrate his various powers. Now happiness is his being's end and aim. One course leads to it, and the prize is secure. The distant and dark intimation of such an end, which, in case of total previous privation, we should have hailed with rapture and have pursued with unconquerable diligence, is made to us a rich and majestic revelation; and can the zeal with which we conform to its edicts ever become intemperate? Never in the eye of God; never in the eye of

Seraphim and Cherubim; but often ill-timed and intemperate, it would seem, in the eye of men. So unerring, perhaps, and so judicious is human sagacity that it is ever loth to enter zealously into this subject; afraid, it would seem, of jeopardizing some whit the stately dignity of human nature by falling into a momentary enthusiasm in this inquiry. Out of this world, all the active intelligences that move in the heavens are absorbed in these views, are incessantly pursuing on the fiery wing of Contemplation the wonders of God's Providence into the abyss of his works. Mind, which is the end and aim of all the Divine Operations, feeds with unsated appetite upon moral and material Nature, that is, upon the order of things which He has appointed. It is perpetually growing wiser and mightier by digesting this immortal food; and, even in our feeble conceptions of the heavenly hosts, we seek to fill up the painful chasm that divides God from his humble creatures upon earth by a magnificent series of godlike intellects. Worlds like ours were the cradle of their infancy. Their minds, like ours, learned the rudiments of thought from the material creation. There ripened and godlike understandings revere the law and study the foundation principles of Morals. But man, in

his nook of earth, knits his brow at the name of his Maker, and gravely apprehends that the discussion of his laws may lead to fanaticism. It seems to me ardour and enthusiasm are the appropriate feelings which belong to things of Eternity and make the *habits* of Angels; but Man waxes cold and slow at the word; and fears to commit himself upon these topics in the presence of his fellow worms.

June 1, 1823.

But this waywardness, in the end, grows to presumption, and there is a time when slighted opportunity ceases to return.

"Praise is the salt that seasons right for man
And whets the appetite for moral good."

"Dat veniam corvis, vexat censura columbas."

TRADE

Men so universally draw their characters after the pattern of their times that great regard is due to any who, spurning the character and humour of an ignoble age, act upon principles not apprehended by the vulgar. Upon this ground we claim veneration for the forefathers of New England, who were an association of men that for once in the history of the world forgot to found

their plans exclusively upon the interests of *trade*, and preferred to trade the finer interests of religion and literature. Trade was always in the world, and indeed, to judge hastily, we might well deem trade to have been the purpose for which the world was created. It is the cause, the support and the object of all government. Without it, men would roam the wilderness alone, and never meet in the kind conventions of social life. Who is he that causes this busy stir, this mighty and laborious accommodation of the world to men's wants? Who is he that plants care like a canker at men's hearts, and furrows their brows with thrifty calculations? that makes money for his instrument, and therewith sets men's passions in ferment and their faculties in action, unites them together in the clamorous streets, or arrays them against each other in war? It is Trade, — Trade which is the mover of the nations, and the pillar whereon the fortunes of life hang. All else is subordinate. Tear down, if you will, the temples of Religion, the museums of Art, the laboratories of Science, the libraries of Learning — and the regret excited among mankind would be cold, alas! and faint; — a few would be found, a few enthusiasts in secret places to mourn over their ruins; — but destroy the temples of Trade, your

stores, your wharves and your floating castles on the deep; restore to the earth the silver and the gold which was dug out thence to serve *his* purposes;—and you shall hear an outcry from the ends of the earth. Society would stand still, and men return howling to forests and caves which would now be the grave, as [they were] once the cradle, of the human race. This partial and inordinate success by which this institution of men wears the crown over all others is necessary; for the prosperity of trade is built upon desires and necessities which nourish no distinction among men; which all,—the high and humble, the weak and strong, can feel, and which must first be answered, before the imprisonment of the mind can be broken and the noble and delicate thoughts can issue out, from which Art and Literature spring. The most enthusiastic philosopher requires to be fed and clothed before he begins his analysis of nature, and scandal has called poetry, taste, imagination the overflowing phantasms of a high-fed animal. True, Archimedes forgot for a moment, in the Sicilian capital, the rigid laws of decorum when he found the theory of the tides, and fiery poets have lived who defied the vile necessities of the flesh and wrote obstinately on, until they starved; but these are instances rare and

extraordinary and are only quoted in evidence as *miracles* by which the reality of these lower revelations was to be attested. And, in despite of them all, the scholar is quickly taught the unwelcome conviction, that his studies are the later luxuries, which the world can easily forego; whilst it cannot spare its meat and its drink and the interests of traffic, which he holds in contempt.

The justice and propriety of this early preference to trade we are not so blind as to doubt; we only lament the poverty of our nature which makes us heirs to such inconveniences. But we complain that here we find new instances of the imperfection of our mind, which — by that universal misapprehension of the means for the end — after the wants are gratified, which trade proposed to gratify, continues to pursue with unslaked appetite these concerns which have ceased to be necessary, to the exclusion of those nobler pursuits which bring honour and greatness upon our race. This mistake is a sore evil under the sun, and under some broad form or other offends us every day. The Merchant said in his heart, I will amass treasure and then buy me these pleasures of refinement and science; when I am free from the fear of want, I will call the Muses from

Helicon and sacrifice at their altars. And he unfurled his canvas on the sea, and sent men on his errands of gain to all corners of the earth. And his purpose seemed good in the eye of the Genii of the air and the Mermaids of the deep. His white sails were swelled with favourable winds, and the Mermaids sung pleasantly to his mariners to cheer them on their way. Ores of gold and silver, mines of diamond and shores of pearl, spice groves of the East and plantations of the West were ransacked to heap the amount of his wealth; but when his will was done and the progress of years added new accumulations to his wealth,—in the abundance of his schemes he forgot his youthful promises for the application of his wealth, he forgot to invoke the Muses and call the Arts and Philosophy to adorn his dwelling. Alas! he was fast yoked into the thraldom of Care,—painfully gathering riches for another to enjoy, and niggardly denying himself the best fruits of his toil. This history of the individual is the history of the nation. Thousands wished well to the scanty, godlike band who kindled and bore the torch of improvement through the darkness of the world and were well nigh persuaded to abandon their own sordid pursuits and ally themselves to their cause. Nations

ripened into civilization and crowded with an enlarging population the narrow confines God gave them to possess, but it was Trade who sent out the superfluous numbers in colonies to people distant territories. Phœnicia, Greece and Rome, vaunting the liberality of their policy, had no loftier motive than the extension of their taxes and their trade.

A reading selected from 29 and 30 chapters of Job, admits of great eloquence. Note the pauses after "now" which occur thrice.

. . . . . .

TEMPTATION

There is an important view, striking the very foundation of moral accountability, which I shall attempt to present. I cannot blame, for I do not feel, a contradiction to Divine Justice in the alarming result of God's experiment on earth. Men have thought, that if a fair and equal election of good and ill and their respective rewards be offered to Man, it cannot be that so huge a majority of wrong-doers should burden the earth. Sin, they say, is too strong — it hath too many pleasures and too many apologies — for our integrity. *God should not* have made it so difficult

Fisher Pinx

SOUTH VIEW OF HARVARD COLLEGE YARD FROM CRAIGIE ROAD, 1823

—if purity be necessary to my salvation — to be pure. I answer, If Temptation were tenfold stronger than it is, I see not, with what face this poor palliation of guilt could be advanced. For all the most clamorous invitations that Vice ever offered, the moment they are brought into close comparison with the Recompense offered to Virtue, do so shrink into mute and secret insignificance that they lose every shadow of effect, nothing that ever occurred to man's fiery imagination bearing any proportion as a picture of delight to the promises granted to obedience. . . .

EPILOGUE

June 11.

When Memory rakes up her treasures, her ingots of thought, I fear she will seldom recur to the Muse's tenth son; and yet she should have been able to gather and condense something from the wealth of fancy which Nature supplies in the beautiful summer. I have played the enthusiast with my book in the greenwood, the huntsman with my gun; have sat upon rocks and mused o'er flood and fell; have indulged the richest indolence of a poet, and am therefore a creditor to Nature for some brilliant and unusual inspira-

tion. But the Goddess is slow of payment—or has forgotten an old bantling. If she was partial once, she is morose now; for familiarity (if awful Nature will permit me to use so bold a word) breeds disgust; and Vinegar is the son of Wine; peradventure I may yet be admitted to the contemplation of her inner magnificence, and her favour may find me, no shrine, indeed, but some snug niche, in the temple of Time. "Tut," says Fortune,—"and if you fail, it shall never be from lack of vanity."

Labour is the son of Resolution, and the father of Greatness, of Health and Wealth. The family is a very thriving one, though it is infested not uncommonly by an execrable Vermin called Care.

JOURNAL XII

THE WIDE WORLD, NO. 11

June, 1823.

[This journal has no dedication. The earlier part is here omitted. Its pages reflect a state of depression in the young writer, doubtless due to poor health and to the mortification that he felt in not being a better teacher. This was largely due to his shyness. Yet he was soon called on to show greater courage, for his brother William, having established a good name for his school, was now for the first time at liberty to do something for himself. He went to Göttingen to study for the ministry, leaving Waldo in full charge of the school.]

JOURNAL OF A WALK TO THE CONNECTICUT

August, 1823.[1]

"Have lights when other men are blind
As pigs are said to see the wind."

Framingham, *August* 22, 1823.
Friday noon, Warren's Hotel.

After a delightful walk of twenty miles, I reached this inn before noon, and in the near recollection of my promenade through Roxbury, Newton, Needham, Natick, do recommend the same, particularly as far as the Lower Falls in Newton, to my friends who are fond of fine scenery.

To this stage of mine errantry no adventure has befallen me; no, not the meeting with a mouse. I both thought and talked a little with myself on the way, and gathered up and watered such sprigs of poetry as I feared had wilted in my memory. I thought how History has a two-fold effect, viz., intellectual pleasure and moral pain. And in the midst of a beautiful country I thought how monotonous and uniform is Nature; but I found now as ever that, maugre all the flights of the sacred muse, the profane

1 This, though written in a pocket note-book, is inserted in its proper place in this journal.

solicitudes of the flesh elevated the Tavern to a high rank among my pleasures.

Worcester; evening, 8 o'clock.

I reached Worcester one half hour ago, having walked forty miles without difficulty. Every time I traverse a turnpike, I find it harder to conceive how they are supported; I met but three or four travellers between Roxbury and Worcester. The scenery all the way was fine, and the turnpike, a road of inflexible principle, swerving neither to the right hand nor the left, stretched on before me, always in sight. A traveller who has nothing particular to think about is apt to make a very lively personification of his Road and to make the better companion of it. The Kraken, thought I, or the Sea-Worm, is *three English* miles long; but this *land worm* of mine is some forty, and those of the hugest.

Saturday: Rice's Hotel, Brookfield.

After passing through Leicester, Spencer and North Brookfield, I am comfortably seated in South Brookfield, sixty miles from home. In Leicester, I met with Stephen Elliot in the barroom of the inn, on his way, it appeared, to

Stafford Springs. He guessed with me a few minutes concerning the design and use of a huge white building opposite the house, and could not decide whether it were court house or whether it were church. But the stageman called, and he went on his way. The building I found to be an Academy containing ordinarily eighty students, — boys and girls. "Not so many girls now," added the bar-keeper, "because there is no female instructor; and they like a woman to teach them the higher things." "Ye stars!" thought I, "if the Metropolis get this notion, the Mogul and I must lack bread." At Spencer, I sympathized with a coachman who complained, that, "ride as far or as fast as he would, the milestones were all alike and told the same number!" Mr. Stevens of North Brookfield is an innholder after my heart. Corpulent and comfortable, honest to a cent, with high opinions of the clergy. And yet he told me there was a mournful rise of schisms since he was a boy, — Unitarians and Universalists, — which, he said, he believed were all one, and he never heard their names till lately. I asked him the cause of all this frightful heterodoxy? The old serpent, he said, was at work deceiving man. He could not but think people *behaved* about as well now as their fathers did;

but then Mr. Bisby (the Universalist) minister of Brookfield is a cunning fox, and by and bye he and his hosts will show what and how bad they really are. My good landlord's philanthropic conclusion was, that there was a monitor within, and, if we minded that, no matter how we speculated.

Sunday evening, *August* 24.

I rested this Sabbath day on the banks of the Quebog. Mr. Stone, a worthy Calvinist, who had been already recommended to my respect, by the hearty praises of my last-named landlord, preached all day, and reminded me forcibly of one of my idols, Dr. Nichols of Portland.[1]

My lord Bacon, my trusty counsellor all the week, has six or seven choice essays for holy time. The aforesaid lord knew passing well what

1 Rev. Ichabod Nichols, pastor of the First Church (Unitarian) of Portland, from 1809 to 1859. The following is quoted from a historical sermon by Rev. John C. Perkins, pastor of the same church: "This man dominated the best thought of this city. . . . He was a man of great seriousness and a fine dignity. . . . He was modest and retiring. He stood for everything that was substantial and permanent in human life. He was a scholar with delicate perceptions of truth. He was a writer who said what his own age needed. Dr. Channing once said, after listening to an address of his, 'I could not have done that; he is my superior.'"

was in man, woman and child, what was in books, and what in palaces. This possessor of transcendent intellect was a mean slave to courts and a conniver at bribery. And now, perchance, if mental distinctions give place to moral ones at the end of life, now this intellectual giant, who has been the instructor of the world and must continue to be a teacher of mankind till the end of time,—has been forced to relinquish his pre-eminence, and in another world to crawl in the dust at the feet of those to whom his mounting spirit was once a sacred guide. One instant succeeding dissolution will perhaps satisfy us that there is no inconsistency in this. Till then, I should be loth to ascribe anything less than celestial state to the Prince of philosophers.

Belchertown, Clapp's Hotel:
Monday afternoon.

After noticing the name of Mr. Rice upon the hat store, upon the blacksmith's shop, and upon the Inn of South Brookfield, I made inquiries of my landlord, and learned that this omni-trader was he himself, who, moreover, owned two lines of stages! This morning Phœbus and I set out together upon our respective journies; and I believe we shall finish them to-

gether, since this village is ten miles from Amherst. The morning walk was delightful; and the sun amused himself and me by making rainbows on the thick mist which darkened the country. After passing through West Brookfield, I breakfasted among some right worshipful waggoners at the pleasant town of Western,[1] and then passed through a part of Palmer (I believe) and Ware to this place. I count that road pleasant and that air good, which forces me to smile from mere animal pleasure, albeit I may be a smiling man; so I am free to commend the road from Cutler's Tavern in Western, as far as Babcock's in Ware, to any youthful traveller, who walks upon a cloudless August morning. Let me not forget to record here the benevolent landlady of Ware who offered me her liquors and crackers upon the precarious credit of my return, rather than exchange my bills.

Monday evening: Bartlett's, AMHERST.

I sit here ninety miles from home, and three from the Institution, and have the pleasure and eke the honour, to waft, on the winged steeds of a wish, my best regards to the lords and ladye who sit at home; to the majesty of Tartary,

1 The town has since been named Warren.

chiefest of men, calling the young satraps to order from the elbow chair and secretly meditating golden schemes in an iron age; then to the young lion of the tribe (to change the metaphor) now resting and musing on his honourable oars; next to my loud-voiced and spare-built friend, loving duty better, oh, abundantly better, than pudding; last to the medalled youth, the anxious Driver and Director of the whole establishment; peace to his Bones.[1] My worthy landlord wishes blessings to the Amherst Institution, which, saith he, howbeit it may have had a muddy foundation, yet the Lord hath blessed.

Thursday, *August.*

Tuesday morning I engaged Mr. Bartlett to bring me to Mrs. Shepard's, and I think the worthy man returned with some complacent

1 He alludes to his brothers: William (the "Majesty of Tartary"), the serious and dignified eldest brother, who, having given up his school for young ladies to Waldo, was probably tutoring Boston youth in the months that remained before his going to study at Göttingen for the ministry.

Edward is the "lion of the tribe," brilliant, eager, ambitious and just entering on his senior year. The good but deficient Robert Bulkeley is the "loud-voiced and spare-built" one, and Charles, the youngest, always a brilliant scholar, is the "medalled youth" at the Latin (?) School.

recollections of the instructions and remarks he had dropped on the way for the stranger's edification. Our wagon ride was somewhat uneasy from below, but its ups and downs were amply compensated by the richness and grandeur visible above and around. Hampshire County rides in wagons. In this pleasant land I found a house full of friends, — a noble house, very good friends. In the afternoon I went to the College. The infant college is an infant Hercules. Never was so much striving, outstretching, and advancing in a literary cause as is exhibited here.

The students all feel a personal responsibility in the support and defence of their young Alma Mater against all antagonists, and as long as this battle abroad shall continue, the Government, unlike all other Governments, will not be compelled to fight with its students within.

The opposition of other towns and counties produces, moreover, a correspondent friendship and kindness from the people in Amherst, and there is a daily exhibition of affectionate feeling between the inhabitants and the scholars, which is the more pleasant as it is so uncommon. They attended the Declamation and Commencement with the interest which parents usually

shew at the exhibitions of schools where their own children are engaged. I believe the affair was first moved, about three years ago, by the Trustees of the Academy. When the corner-stone of the South College was laid, the institution did not own a dollar. A cartload of stones was brought by a farmer in Pelham, to begin the foundation; and now they have two large brick edifices, a President's house, and considerable funds. Dr. Moore has left them six or seven thousand dollars. A poor one-legged man died last week in Pelham, who was not known to have any property, and left them four thousand dollars to be appropriated to the building of a chapel, over whose door is to be inscribed his name, Adams Johnson. William Phillips gave a thousand, and William Eustis a hundred dollars, and great expectations are entertained from some rich men, friends to the Seminary, who will die without children.

They have wisely systematized this spirit of opposition, which they have found so lucrative, and the students are all divided into thriving opposition societies, which gather libraries, laboratories, mineral cabinets, etc., with an indefatigable spirit, which nothing but rivalry could inspire. Upon this impulse, they write, speak,

and study in a sort of fury, which, I think, promises a harvest of attainments. The Commencement was plainly that of a young college, but had strength and eloquence mixed with the apparent "*vestigia ruris*," and the scholar who gained the prize for declamation, the evening before, would have a first prize at any Cambridge competition.

The College is supposed to be worth net 85,000 dollars.

After spending three days very pleasantly at Mrs. Shepard's, among orators, botanists, mineralogists, and above all, ministers, I set off on Friday morning with Thomas Greenough and another little cousin in a chaise to visit Mount Holyoke. How high the hill may be I know not; for different accounts make it eight, twelve, and sixteen hundred feet from the river. The prospect repays the ascent, and although the day was hot and hazy, so as to preclude a distant prospect, yet all the broad meadows in the immediate vicinity of the mountain through which the Connecticutt winds make a beautiful picture, seldom rivalled. After adding our names in the books to the long list of strangers whom curiosity has attracted to this hill, we descended in safety without encountering rattlesnake or

viper that have given so bad fame to the place. We were informed that about forty people ascend the mountain every fair day during the summer. After passing through Hadley meadows, I took leave of my companions at Northampton bridge and crossed for the first time the far-famed Yankee river. From the hotel in Northampton I visited Mr. Theodore Strong, where I have been spending a couple of days of great pleasure. His five beautiful daughters and son make one of the finest families I ever saw. In the afternoon, I went on horseback (Oh, Hercules!) with Allen Strong to Round Hill, the beautiful site of the Gymnasium, and to Shepherd's Factory, about four miles from the centre of the town. Saturday morning, we went in a chaise in pursuit of a lead mine said to lie about five miles off, which we found after great and indefatigable search. We tied our horse and descended, by direction, into a somewhat steep glen, at the bottom of which we found the covered entrance of a little canal about five feet wide. Into this artificial cavern we fired a gun to call out the miner from within. The report was long and loudly echoed and after a weary interval we discerned a boat with lamps lighted in its side issuing from this dreary abode. We

welcomed the miner to the light of the sun, and leaving our hats without, and binding our heads, we lay down in the boat and were immediately introduced to a cave varying in height from four to six and eight feet, hollowed in a pretty soft sandstone through which the water continually drops. When we lost the light of the entrance and saw only this gloomy passage by the light of lamps, it required no effort of the imagination to believe we were leaving the world, and our smutty ferryman was a true Charon. After sailing a few hundred feet, the vault grew higher and wider overhead, and there was a considerable trickling of water on our left; this was the ventilator of the mine and reaches up to the surface of the earth. We continued to advance in this manner for 900 feet, and then got out of the boat and walked on planks a little way to the end of this excavation. Here we expected to find the lead vein, and the operations of the subterranean man, but were sadly disappointed. He had been digging through this stone for 12 years, and has not yet discovered any lead at all. Indications of lead at the surface led some Boston gentlemen to set this man at work, in the expectation that after cutting his dark canal for 1000 feet, he would reach the vein, and the

canal would then draw off the water which prevented them from digging from above. As yet, he has found no lead, but, as he gravely observed, "has reached some *excellent granite*." In this part of the work he has forty dollars for every foot he advances and it occupies him ten days to earn this.

He has advanced 975 feet, and spends his days, winter and summer, alone in this damp and silent tomb. He says the place is excellent for meditation; and that he sees no goblins. Many visitors come to his dark residence, and pay him a shilling apiece for the sight. A young man, he said, came the day before us, who after going in a little way was taken with terrors and said he felt faint, and returned. Said miner is a brawny person, and discreet withal; has a wife and lives near the hole. All his excavations are performed by successive blasting.

In the afternoon I set out on my way to Greenfield, intending to pass the Sabbath with George Ripley. Mr. Strong insisted on carrying me to Hatfield, and thence I passed, chiefly on foot, through Whately and Deerfield over sands and pine barrens, and across Green River to Greenfield, and did not arrive there till after ten o'clock and found both taverns shut up. I should

have staid in Deerfield if Mr. S. had not ridiculed the idea of getting to Greenfield that night. In the morning I called at Mr. Ripley's, and was sorely disappointed to learn that his son was at Cambridge. The family were exceedingly hospitable, and I listened with as great pleasure to a sermon from Rev. Mr. Perkins of Amherst in the morning, and in the afternoon rode over to the other parish with Mr. R. to hear Rev. Lincoln Ripley. After service Mr. L. R. returned with us, and in the evening we heard another sermon from Mr. Perkins which pleased me abundantly better than his matins. He is a loud-voiced, scripture-read divine, and his compositions have the element of a potent eloquence, but he lacks taste. By the light of the evening star I walked with my reverend uncle,[1] a man who well sustained the character of an aged missionary. It is a new thing to him, he said, to *correspond* with his wife, and he attends the mail regularly every Monday morning to send or receive a letter.

1 Rev. Lincoln Ripley was Mr. Emerson's step-great-uncle, as being brother of Dr. Ezra Ripley, minister of Concord, who had married the widow of Rev. William Emerson of Concord, the builder of the "Old Manse," and chaplain in the army at Ticonderoga. Rev. Lincoln Ripley was minister of Waterford, Maine.

After a dreamless night, and a most hospitable entertainment, I parted from Greenfield and through an unusually fine country, crossed the Connecticutt (shrunk to a rivulet in this place somewhere in Montagu). My solitary way grew somewhat more dreary, as I drew nearer Wendell, and the only relief to hot sandy roads and a barren, monotonous region was one fine forest with many straight, clean pine trees upwards of a hundred feet high, "fit for the mast of some great Admiral."[1] All that day was a thoughtless, heavy pilgrimage, and Fortune deemed that such a crowded week of pleasure demanded a reaction of pain. At night I was quartered in the meanest caravansera which has contained my person since the tour began. Traveller! weary and jaded, who regardest the repose of thine earthly tenement; traveller, hungry and athirst, whose heart warms to the hope of animal gratification; traveller of seven or seventy years, beware, beware, I beseech you, of Haven's Inn in New Salem. Already he is laying a snare for your kindness or credulity in fencing in a mineral spring for your infirmities. Beware.

[1] "The tallest pine
Hewn on Norwegian hills to be the mast
Of some great ammiral"

MILTON, *Paradise Lost*, Book 1.

From Mr. Haven's garret bed I sallied forth Tuesday morning towards Hubbardston, but my cramped limbs made little speed. After dining in Hubbardston I walked seven miles farther to Princeton, designing to ascend Wachusett with my tall cousin Thomas Greenough, if I should find him there, and then set out for home in the next day's stage. But when morning came, and the stage was brought, and the mountain was a mile and a half away, — learned again an old lesson, that, the beldam Disappointment sits at Hope's door. I jumped into the stage and rode away, Wachusett untrod. At Sterling, I learned that Oliver Blood studies physic in Worcester. At Boston I saw Nat Wood[1] on his way to Amherst, N. H., to study law, his pedagogical career being terminated — *O fortunate nimium!*

Close-cooped in a stage-coach with a score of happy, dusty rustics, the pilgrim continued his ride to Waltham, and alighting there, spent an agreeable evening at Rev. Mr. Ripley's.[2] Home he came from thence the next morning, right

1 Blood and Wood were his classmates.

2 Rev. Samuel Ripley, minister of Waltham, was step-uncle of the Emerson boys, and always a kind friend and benefactor, especially to Waldo.

glad to sit down once more in a quiet well-fed family at Canterbury.

. . . . . .

CANTERBURY, *September*, 1823.

I have often found cause to complain that my thoughts have an ebb and flow. Whether any laws fix them, and what the laws are, I cannot ascertain. I have quoted a thousand times the memory of Milton and tried to bind my thinking season to one part of the year, or to one sort of weather; to the sweet influence of the Pleiades, or to the summer reign of Lyra. The worst is, that the ebb is certain, long and frequent, while the flow comes transiently and seldom.[1]

Once when *Vanity* was full fed, it sufficed to keep me at work and to produce some creditable scraps; but alas! it has long been dying of

1 So in "The Poet"; *Poems* (appendix), p. 319: —

> Is there warrant that the waves
> Of thought, in their mysterious caves,
> Will heap in me their highest tide,
> In me, therewith beatified?
> Unsure the ebb and flow of thought,
> The moon comes back, — the spirit not.

Also in "The Preacher," *Lectures and Biographical Sketches*, p. 219.

a galloping starvation, and the Muse, I fear me, will die too. The dreams of my childhood are all fading away and giving place to some very sober and very disgusting views of a quiet mediocrity of talents and condition — nor does it appear to me that any application of which I am capable, any efforts, any sacrifices, could at this moment restore any reasonableness to the familiar expectations of my earlier youth. But who is he that repines? Let him read the song about the linter-goose.

Melons and plums and peaches, eating and drinking, and the bugle, all the day long. These are the glorious occupations which engross a proud and thinking being, running his race of preparation for the eternal world. Man is a foolish slave who is busy in forging his own fetters. Sometimes he lifts up his eyes for a moment, admires freedom, and then hammers the rivets of his chain. Who does not believe life to be an illusion when he sees the daily, yearly, livelong, inconsistency that men indulge, in thinking so well and doing so ill? . . .

GOD

. . . God's works are fruits of his character; copies (as ancient philosophy expressed it) of

his mind and wishes. One could not venerate him if he were only good. Who could bow down before a god who had infinite instincts of benevolence, and no thought; in whom the eye of knowledge was shut; who was kind and good because he knew no better; who was infinitely gentle as brutes are gentle? The poor Egyptian plebeian layman might do so, who worshipped a divine Ox, for his gracious tameness; but an enlightened Man, with the spirit of a man, would bid them bring the stake and fire and make him Martyr, ere he surrendered his mind and body to such a prostration. Man reveres the Providence of God as the benign and natural *result* of his omniscience; and expects in the imperfect image of God an imperfect copy of the same eternal order.[1] . . .

October 5.

Milord W.[2] from Andover let me into his mystery about *Edwards on the Will*, and told me,

1 Mr. Cabot, in his Memoir (p. 103), gives two letters on God and Providence, written at this period by Emerson to his Aunt Mary, who, as he used to say, "wished everyone to be a Calvinist but herself."

2 William Withington, a classmate, who became an Episcopalian minister. In the *Century Magazine* for July, 1883, are printed several interesting letters written to him by Emerson

withal, that the object of the piece was to prove that President E. has not advanced human knowledge one step, for his *definition* includes the very proposition which the book is designed to establish. W. saith, moreover, that perchance the President has done something, albeit his definitions be imprudent and entangled. And, perchance, the fault of apparently proving an identical proposition lies in the nature of the subject which, though so intricate before as to have ever been debateable ground, is made so plain by the able and skilful statements of Edwards, that we are made to see the truth, and wonder that it ever was disputed. Waldo E. will please consult upon this topic, on one side Edwards, Priestley, and Belsham; on the other, Clarke, and Stewart (?). Dr. Reid is to be read by me, *quo citius, eo melius;* and Edinburgh Review of La Place's *Calculation of Chances;* also are to be stated anew the two propositions unanswerable concerning Necessity. One of them has occurred in Wideworld No. 8.[1]

. . . . . .

a year earlier than this entry. By the kind permission of the Century Company, extracts from these are introduced after this paragraph.

1 Under "Benevolence."

[In April, 1822, Emerson wrote to Withington at Andover] "to congratulate you upon your singular exemption from the general misery of your compeers, who have rushed into the tutors' desks of every Minerva's temple in the country; then, to claim the honour of corresponding with one scholar in the land, — and to enjoin it upon you as a primal duty to write a letter from your seat of science to a desponding schoolmaster.

"I am delighted to hear there is such a profound studying of German and Hebrew, Parkhurst and Jahn, and such other names as the memory aches to think of, on foot at Andover. . . . What are you studying beside Bibles? Do you let suns and moons, eclipses and comets pass without calculation or account? Is there not time for trigonometry — no, not for a logarithm? Or, if all these are forgotten, I hope you have not sacrificed Johnson and Burke, Shakespeare and Scott altogether. Books are not so numerous at Andover but that you will want the Cambridge Library." . . .

(*July*, 1822.)

[Emerson praises *The Fortunes of Nigel*, which he is reading, as being] "I fear, ex-

cluded from your reading Catalogue because it is so unfortunate as to bear the name of a *novel.* But if masterly, unrivalled genius add any weight to the invitation for a scholar to step out of his Greek and Hebrew circle of sad enchantment that he may pluck such flowers of taste and fancy as never bloomed before, to deck his strength withal, — why then he may read Scott, and particularly the latter novels. . . . Perhaps it is wasting your time to trouble you with my lucubrations about novels and poetical idolatry, but, at the moment, I have it more at heart than aught else, and if, when you read this, you be stooping to some musty folio which suffered under the types of a century ago, you will oblige me by transferring your solemn thoughts thereupon on paper to me, — yea, if it be a dictionary, if it be anything earthly but mathematics." . . .

(*November*, 1822.)

[Emerson speaks of Plato, and goes on —] "I have read one very useful book of late, Stewart's Second Dissertation. It saves you a world of reading by laying open the history of moral and intellectual philosophy since the Revival of Letters. . . . It is a beautiful and instructive abridgment of the thousand volumes

of Locke, Leibnitz, Voltaire, Bayle, Kant and the rest. . . . The next books on my table are Hume, and Gibbon's *Miscellanies*. I shall be on the high road to ruin presently with such companions, but I cannot help admiring the genius and novelty of the one, and the greatness and profound learning of the other, maugre the scepticism and abominable sneers of both. If you read Gibbon and Hume, you have to *think*, and Gibbon wakes you up from slumber to wish yourself a scholar and resolve to be one." . . .

DR. CHANNING

Sunday, *October*, 1823.

I heard Dr. Channing deliver a discourse upon Revelation as standing in comparison with Nature. I have heard no sermon approaching in excellence to this, since the Dudleian Lecture.[1] The language was a transparent medium, conveying with the utmost distinctness the pictures in his mind to the mind of the hearers. He considered God's word to be the only expounder of his works, and that Nature had always been found insufficient to teach men the great doctrines which Revelation inculcated. Astronomy had in one or two ways

1 Also by Dr. Channing.

an unhappy tendency. An universe of matter in which Deity would display his power and greatness must be of infinite extent and complicate relations, and, of course, too vast to be measured by the eye and understanding of man. Hence errors. Astronomy reveals to us [an] infinite number of worlds like our own, accommodated for the residence of such beings as we of gross matter. But to kindle our piety and urge our faith, we do not want such a world as this, but a purer, a world of morals and of spirits. La Place has written in the mountain album of Switzerland his avowal of Atheism. Newton had a better master than suns and stars. He heard of heaven ere he philosophized, and after travelling through mazes of the universe he returned to bow his laurelled head at the feet of Jesus of Nazareth. Dr. Channing regarded Revelation as much a part of the order of things as any other event. It would have been wise to have made an abstract of the Discourse immediately.

O keep the current of thy spirits even;
If it be ruffled by too full a flood,
'T is turbid; or, if drained, goes dry. The mind,
In either case obeys the animal pulse,
And weeps the loss of unreturning time.

Mr. Hume's Essay upon *Necessary Connection* proves that events are conjoined, and not connected; that we have no knowledge but from experience. We have no experience of a Creator and there[fore] know of none. The constant appeal is to our feelings from the glozed lies of the deceived [deceiver?], but one would feel safer and prouder to see the victorious answer to these calumnies upon our nature set down in impregnable propositions.

> Pride carves rich emblems on its seals,
> And slights the throng that dogs its heels.
> Fair Vanity hath bells on cap and shoes,
> And eyes his moving shadow as he goes.

We put up with Time and Chance because it costs too great an effort to subdue them to our wills, and minds that feel an embryo greatness stirring within them let it die for want of nourishment. Plans that only want maturity, ideas that only need explanation to lead the thinker on to a far nobler being than now he dreams of, good resolutions whose dawning was like the birth of gods in their benevolent promise, sudden throbs of charity and impulses to goodness that spake most auspicious omens, are

suffered to languish and blight in hopeless barrenness. . . .

December 13, 1823.

Edinburgh Review has a fine eulogy of Newton and Dr. Black, etc., in the first article of the 3d Volume. No. xxxvi contains a review of Mrs. Grant on Highlanders, and, in it, good thoughts upon the progress of *Manners*. "A gentleman's character is a compound of obligingness and self-esteem." The same volume reviews Alison, and gives an excellent condensed view of his theory. The charm of all these discussions is only a fine luxury, producing scarce any good, unless that of substituting a pure pleasure for impure. Occasionally this reading helps one's conversation; but seldom. The reason and whole mind is not forwarded by it, as by *history*. The good in life that seems to be most REAL, is not found in reading, but in those successive triumphs a man achieves over habits of moral or intellectual indolence, or over an ungenerous Spirit and mean propensities.

LOVE

December.

Love is a holy passion, and is the instrument of our connexion with Deity; and when we

drop the body, this, perhaps, will constitute the motive and impulse to all the acquisitions of an immortal education. As we are instinctively ashamed of selfishness, we venerate *love*, the noble and generous nature of which seeks another's good. . . . Embryo powers of which we were not hitherto conscious are nursed into the manhood of mind. A powerful motive is to the character what a skilful hypothesis is to the progress of science; it affords facility and room for the arrangement of the growing principles of our nature. What lay in chaos and barren before, is now adjusted in a beautiful and useful order, which exposes to the light numberless connexions and relations and fine issues of thought, not easily perceived until such a system is laid. A motive thus powerful and of such benignant fruits is *love*. . . . It bears many forms, but is *love*. It is the attachment to truth, to a sentiment, to our country, to a fellow being or to God, that has won and worn the crown of martyrdom, and that has stirred up in men's minds all the good which the earth has seen. Indeed pure love is too pure a principle for human bosoms; and, were it not mixed with the animal desires of our nature, would not meet that unqualified and universal honour it now

finds among men. . . . What does the sensualist know of love? of such love as exists between God and man, and man and God; of such love as the pure mind conceives for moral grandeur, for the contemplation of which it was made?

FEAR

Love has an empire in the world, but Fear has an empire also. And I wish, on the comparison, this palsied, leprous principle be not found to have the larger sway. The conventions, as they are called, of civilized life, the artificial order and conversation of society, are propped on this miserable reed. Now and then, there are minds of such indomitable independence as to overleap the wretched restraints of fashion, and who let the Universe hear the true tones of their Voice; unpractised to "the tune of the time," unembarrassed by fear; who venture to speak out, and to treat their fellow creature as their peer, and the Deity as God. Such men embrace, in their apprehension, a larger portion of existence than their weaker brethren in the shackles of prudence. By casting a glance on the future they discriminate between trifles and magnificent things, and learn to weigh the world in a true scale, and to

undervalue what is called greatness below. I would not be understood to cast imputation on good-breeding in the human throng; it is certainly a convenient, perhaps a necessary thing; and its absence could not be borne. But in the higher connexions of which I speak, it is to be treated *merely* as a convenient thing, and when it pretends to higher claims it is to be treated with contempt. Shall the fear which an expanding mind entertains of the eye or tongue of each insignificant man and woman in its way interfere with its progress towards the ripe excellence of its being? There are times in the history of every thinking mind, when it is the recipient of uncommon and awful thought, when somewhat larger draughts of the Spiritual Universe are let in upon the soul; and it breathes eloquent ejaculations to God, and would cease to be the plaything of petty events, and would become a portion of that world in which it has sojourned. But that mind returns into the company of unsympathising minds, and the humble routine of their *small* talk is little akin to the revelations opening upon his soul; and must what is called Good Manners freeze the tongue that should drop heaven's wisdom to dumbness; and must the

eye struck with the glory of Paradise be levelled to the earth?

SHAKSPEARE

. . . . . .

When merry England had her virgin queen,
And Glory's temple in the isle was seen,
On Avon's bank a child of earth was born
In meads where fairies wind the midnight horn.
The tiny dancers leaped in frolic wild
And o'er the cradle blessed the sleeping child.

RELIGION

There is danger of a *poetical* religion from the tendencies of the age. There is a celebrated passage in the prose works of the great Christian bard which is precious to the admirers of Milton. I refer to the 2d Book of *Reason of Church Government*, etc. There is probably no young man who could read that eloquent chapter without feeling his heart warm to the love of virtue and greatness, and without making fervent resolutions that his age should be made better, because he had lived. Yet these resolutions, unless diligently nourished by prayer and expanded into action by intense study, will be presently lost in the host of worldly cares; but they leave one

fruit that may be poisonous: they leave a self-complacency arising from having thought so nobly for a moment, which leads the self-deceiver to believe himself better than other men.

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Bible; Democritus; Socrates; Plato; Horace; Norse Saga on Eric's voyage to Greenland; Roger Bacon; Luther; Galileo; Shakspeare; Bacon; Milton; Waller; Cowley; Newton, *Principia;* Leibnitz; Pope; Neal, *History of the Puritans;* Edwards, *On the Will;* Johnson; Franklin; Reid; Hume, *Essays;* Boscovich;

William Robertson; Playfair; Laplace, *apud* Edinburgh Review;

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Sharon Turner, *History of the Saxons;*

Dr. Channing; Edward Everett, *Lecture on Greek Literature;*

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JOURNAL XIII

THE WIDE WORLD, No. 12

Δὸς ποῦ στῶ

SAMENESS

CANTERBURY, *December* 14, 1823.

The world changes its masters, but keeps its own identity, and entails upon each new family of the human race, that come to garnish it with names and memorials of themselves, — certain indelible features and unchanging properties. Proud of their birth to a new and brilliant life, each presumptuous generation boasts its dominion over nature; forgetful that these very springing powers within, which nurse this arrogance, are part of the fruits of that Nature, whose secret but omnipotent influence makes them all that they are. The world which they inhabit they call their servant, but it proves the real master. Moulded of its clay, breathing its atmosphere, fed of its elements, they must wear its livery, the livery of corruption and change, and obey the laws which *all* its atoms obey.

. . . The lively fancy of some men has induced them to entertain fanciful anticipations of the progress of mankind, and of radical revolutions in their manners, passions, and pursuits, already forming in the womb of ages. But the quiet wisdom of history, as she winds along her way through sixty centuries, speaks of no wonders, and of little glory. Noah awoke from his wine as the sensualist awakes to-day, but without the Patriarch's excuse. Nimrod, long of yore, hunted man and beast from the same furious impulses that drove Alexander and Cæsar and Buonaparte over Europe. No vices, that we ever heard of, have grown old and died. (They are a vampire brood and live upon those whom they destroy.) They outlast the pyramids, and laugh at Destruction. The same topics which the eldest moralist urged are repeated by our preachers now, and received with the same repugnance by the first and last offender. Suffering and sickness are the same thing now as of old. No one passion has become extinct. Joy has not altered its nature, nor learned to last. Man has died as a leaf. Families and nations have mouldered; but all the traits of their nature have been faithfully transmitted without an irregularity.

There is a much vaunted progress in the

world, from the rudeness of savage habits to the prosperous refinement of civilized nations. But the change is very short from the barbarian to the polished gentleman; at least, what is cast aside is very insignificant compared with what remains — of the dull, unmoveable nature. The world, I said, holds more dominion than it yields — both the natural and moral system. . . .

SELF-ESTEEM

I see no reason why I should bow my head to man, or cringe in my demeanour. When the soul is disembodied, he that has nothing else but a towering independence has one claim to respect; whilst genius and learning may provoke our contempt for their supple knees. When I consider my poverty and ignorance, and the positive superiority of talents, virtues and manners, which I must acknowledge in many men, I am prone to merge my dignity in a most uncomfortable sense of unworthiness. But when I reflect that I am an immortal being, born to a destiny immeasurably high, deriving my moral and intellectual attributes directly from Almighty God, and that my existence and condition as his child must be forever independent of the controul or will of my fellow children, — I am ele-

vated in my own eyes to a higher ground in life and a better self-esteem. But, alas, few men hold with a strong grasp the sceptre of self-government and can summon into exercise, at will, whatever set of feelings suits their judgment best. One is apt, when in society, to be tormented with this odious abasement, to wonder reluctantly with a foolish face of praise, and to consent, with bitter inward reproaches, to things and thoughts he cannot combat; and, in solitude only, to be uplifted by this manly but useless independence. A vigorous resolution is not enough to conquer this abominable habit. A humble Christian would not wallow in his humility. His reverence for the Creator precludes an extravagant deference to the creature.

ROMANCE

. . . . . .

Romance grows out of ignorance, and so is the curse of its own age, and the ornament of those that follow. Romance is never present, always remote; not a direct, but reflected ray. It is things cruel and abominable in act that become romantic in memory. Unprincipled bandits are Red Cross Knights, and Templars and

Martyrs even, in the Song of this Century.[1] In individual history, disagreeable occurrences are remembered long after with complacency. A Romantic Age, properly speaking, cannot exist. Eating and drinking, cold and poverty, speedily reduce men to vulgar animals. Heaven and earth hold nothing fanciful. As mind advances, all becomes practical. Knowledge is a law-giver,—as fancy is an abolisher of laws,—and introduces order and limit, even into the character of Deity.

Nevertheless Romance is mother of Knowledge—this ungrateful son that eats up his parent. It is only by searching for wonders that they found truth. *Omne ignotum pro magnifico;* if the unknown was not magnified, nobody would explore. Europe would lack the regenerating impulse, and America lie waste, had it not been for El Dorado. The history of all science is alike,—men guess, and to verify their guesses they go and see, and are disappointed, but bring back truth. That fables should abound, seems not to indicate any especial activity of mind, for, though Greece had many, stupid Indostan has more. It may be that theirs are the traditionary ingenuity of that supposed ancient parent people

1 In Greece, such a person was a hero in the second generation, a giant in the third, and a god in the fourth. (R.W. E.)

of Asia, that Bailey wrote of. She that is not gay or gaudy, pitiful or capricious, 'that liveth and conquereth forevermore,' that is 'the strength and the wisdom, the power and majesty of all ages'[1] is *Truth*.

[CROSSING]

A nation, like a tree, does not thrive well till it is engraffed with a foreign stock.

[EAST INDIAN MYTHOLOGY]

The Indian Pantheon is of prodigious size; 330 million Gods have in it each their heaven, or rather each their parlour, in this immense "goddery." "In quantity and absurdity their superstition has nothing to match it, that is or ever was in the world." (See two articles on Hindu Mathematics and Mythology in Vol. 29 of the *Edinburgh Review*.)

BEAUTY

The theory of Mr. Alison, assigning the beauty of the object to the mind of the beholder, is natural and plausible. This want of uniformity is useful. It prevents us all from falling in love with the same face, and as the

[1] Esdras iv, 38, 40.

associations are accidental, enables them to hope and to succeed, to whose form and feature partial Nature has been niggard of her ornaments. A homely verse of blessed truth in human history saith: —

> "There lives no goose so gray, but soon or late,
> She finds some honest gander for her mate."

Byron's fine verses are conformable to this theory: —

> "Of its own beauty is the mind diseased,
> And fevers into false creation," etc.

December 31, 1823.

I bear no badge, no tinsel star
Glistens upon my breast,
Nor jewelled crown nor pictured car
Robs me of rest.

I am not poor, but I am proud
Of one inalienable right,
Above the envy of the crowd —
Thought's holy light.

Better it is than gems or gold,
And oh, it cannot die,
But thought will glow when the Sun grows cold
And mix with Deity.

1824

A Merry New Year to the Wide World!

IMPULSE OF THE PURITAN MOVEMENT

The theory of the strong impulse is true, I believe, nor does it matter at all what sort of being or event impart it. Religion was always one of the strongest. Few bodies or parties have served the world so well as the Puritans. From their irreverent zeal came most of the improvements of the British Constitution. It was they who settled North America. Bradford and Winthrop and Standish, [the] Mathers and Jonathan Edwards, Otis, Hawley, Hancock, Adams, Franklin, and whatever else of vigorous sense, or practical genius this country shews, are the issue of Puritan stock. The community of language with England has doubtless deprived us of that original, characteristic literary growth that has ever accompanied, I apprehend, the first bursting of a nation from the bud. Our era of exploits and civilization is ripe enow, and, had it not been dissipated by the unfortunate rage for periodical productions, our literature should have been born and grown ere now to a Greek or Roman stature. Franklin is such a

fruit as might be expected from such a tree. Edwards, perhaps more so. The Puritans had done their duty to literature when they bequeathed it the *Paradise Lost* and *Comus;* to science, by [1] to legislation, by [1] ; to all the great interests of humanity, by planting the New World with their thrifty stock. If there be such a thing as the propagation of moral and intellectual character for many generations, the prosperity of America might have been safely foretold. The energy of an abused people, whose eyes the light of books and progress of knowledge had just opened, has a better title to immortality than that vulgar physical energy which some nations are supposed to inherit from Gothic or Scandinavian sires. Family pride engrafted on a pedigree of a thousand nobles yields to the pride of intellectual power, the pride of indomitable purpose. A few stern leaders of that stern sect nourished in their bosoms settled designs of reform, and gave to the design such shape and impulse, that when they slept in the earth, the hope failed not. It was the nursling of an iron race. Their prayers, thoughts and deeds were brothers to the sentiment. It grew and throve mightily in England.

1 These blanks occur in the original.

Its tremendous activity outwent, doubtless, the expectations of its early friends and the apprehensions of its enemies. The old courses into which national feeling runs were broken up. Wise men were aghast at the fury of the convulsion, and abandoned in so wild a tempest the helm which no human hand could providently hold.

. . . . . .

Bear witness England and France in their Regicide Revolutions. Nameless and birthless scoundrels climbed up in the dark, and sat in the seat of the Stuarts and Bourbons. Cromwell and Napoleon plucked them down when the light returned, and locked their own yoke round the necks of mankind.

A SCHOOL

Men are not aware, and pedagogues least of all, how much truth is in that tritest of commonplaces, 'that one may study human nature to advantage in a school.' When a man has been reading or hearing the history of politic men, of insinuating contrivance which neutralized hostility; of arts that brought the sturdiest prejudices to parley; of men whose eye and tongue got them that ascendency over other men's

minds which the sword cannot give — from Pericles, through Augustus Cæsar and unnumbered Italians, down to Charles II, and to Aaron Burr even, he is often stung with the desire of being himself a cunning workman in that art of arts — human nature.[1] But when he looks around on his acquaintances in search of materials, the force of habit is so strong that he cannot strip himself

1 In connection with these almost Machiavellian aspirations of the young schoolmaster, now labouring alone with the administrative difficulties of "lifting the truncheon against the fair-haired daughters of this raw city," a few words may be quoted said by him, nearly fifty years later, to some of them : "My brother was early old . . . at eighteen he offered himself as a grave and experienced professor, who had seen much of life, and was ready to give the overflowing of his wisdom and ripe maturity to the youth of his native city. His mind was method ; his constitution was order ; and, though quiet and amiable, the tap of his pencil, you will remember, could easily enforce a silence which the spasmodic activity of other teachers cannot often command. I confess to an utter want of this same virtue. I was nineteen [on joining William, two years later] ; had grown up without sisters, and, in my solitary and secluded way of living, had no acquaintance with girls. I still recall my terrors at entering the school : my timidities at French, the infirmities of my cheek, and my occasional admiration of some of my pupils, — *absit invidia verbo*, — and the occasional vexation when the will of the pupils was a little too strong for the will of the teacher." — Cabot's *Memoir*, p. 70.

of the old feelings that always arise at the sight of those well-known persons, nor come to consider them as mere subjects to work upon. He cannot, if he try, keep on, nay, can seldom put on, the iron mask he would assume. Nature will speak out, in spite of his grimace, in the old vulgar frankness of a man to his fellow. All his projected artificial greatness, his systematic courtesy, which, under the guise of kindness, pride devises to keep men at bay, his promised self controul, his wisdom that should drop only aphorisms, all falls quite down. Ambition will drop asleep, and the naked mediocrity of the man is seen as it was wont, and he says and does ordinary things in a very ordinary way, and his influence, which was to be so enormous, is quite insignificant. Before these disappointments occurred, the experiment wore a very practicable air, and afterwards he always attributes the failure, not to any absurdity or impossibility in the scheme itself, but to the unconquerable opposition he had to encounter, in the strength of the habits he long before formed. This in many instances gives rise to the expression of a wish to go among strangers. The aspirant very naturally believes that he shall get rid of the associations by escaping from their objects. It may be he cheats

himself. He does not know that the feelings he blushes for are his feelings towards the species and not towards individuals. But if there be any hope for the experiment, and I sometimes think there is a great deal, it is in the theatre of a school. The artificial character and deportment assumed, the unstooping dignity which in all ages mark out the pedagogue to the reverence or ridicule of mankind, is eminently propitious to this attempt.

ARISTOCRACY

Aristocracy is a good sign.[1] Aristocracy has been the hue and cry in every community where there has been anything good, any society worth associating with, since men met in cities. It must be everywhere. 'T were the greatest calamity to have it abolished. It went nearest to its death in the French Revolution, of all time. And if, to-night, an earthquake should sink every patrician house in the city, to-morrow there would be as distinct an aristocracy as now. The only change would be that the second sort would have become first, but they would be as unmingling, as

1 Compare "Lecture on the Times," *Nature, Addresses,* etc., p. 261; "Manners," *Essays,* 2d series, p. 129; "Aristocracy," *Letters and Biographical Sketches,* p. 31.

much separated from the lower class, as ever the rich men of to-day were from them. No man would consent to live in society if he was obliged to admit everybody to his house that chose to come. Robinson Crusoe's island would be better than a city if men were obliged to mix together indiscriminately, heads and points, with all the world. Envy is the tax which all distinction must pay.

GENIUS *versus* KNOWLEDGE

January 25, 1824.

Profound knowledge is good, but profound genius is better, because, though one obtains with greater ease all the thoughts of all wise men, which the other obtains slowly by adding, himself, conclusion to conclusion, yet in the end, when both have arrived at the same amount of knowledge, the latter is much the richest. . . . They have not only a certain sum of intelligence to get, but a great expedition to perform. No petty, circumscribed offices to discharge, whose narrow details daily return; no functions wherein mechanical adroitness avails more than acquaintance with principles, but immortal life in an unbounded universe. They are both to be shortly introduced into the immense

storehouse of eternal truth. Their faculties are to be tasked to solve the secret enigmas of science by whose successive development the history of Nature is to be explained. The universe, to the eyes of ignorance, is but a shining chaos. And when the veil of flesh is rent, and the eyes of the spirit open, human perception will shrink from the splendour of the spiritual world. But there will be no comparison between the fitness of one and the other of the pilgrims who are to go on that heavenly road, from knowledge to knowledge. He who has sharpened his faculties by long and painful thought enters, in a mighty sphere, but upon an accustomed task. Education has armed him in the panoply of thought. He moves gracefully, like one at home in that etherial country. But his companion, whose habits have not been similar, though he recognizes some bright forms in the scenery, is a stranger to the customs and the tongue of that glorious land, and must walk among its wonders in stupid amazement long ere their order is seen, and must forever loiter at a distance from the other. Considered with relation to our whole existence, that habits of thought are better than knowledge—was the original position of my rhetoric.

. . . . . .

FRIENDSHIP

Sympathy is the wine of life. A man has comfort in a friend when he is absent and when he is nigh. "The panic of physical strength reinforceth the onset," and so is the society of two men dearer to them for the interval of interruption. Friends fill that interval with pleasant thoughts which borrow their charm from the magic of this gentle sentiment. They treasure up the occurrences and thoughts, the times and chances that were mixed in their cup of life, to regale each other with the feast of memory. Words may be free, thought may be free, and the heart laid bare to your friend, but, nevertheless, the freedom, even of friendship, hath a limit, and beware how he passes it. . . .

SOCIETY

Men pay a price for admission to the civilization of society. Some pay twenty, thirty, forty, or fifty hundred dollars a year to be permitted to take certain high and higher seats therein. My mother and I might subsist on two hundred [dollars], but we are willing to buy with twelve or thirteen times as much a more convenient and reputable place in the world. Every man who

values this bargain which he drives so zealously must give the whole weight of his support to the public, civil, religious, literary institutions which make it worth his toil. Keep the moral fountains pure. Open schools. Guard the Sabbath, if you be a member or lover of civil society, as you would not tremble at the report of its earthquake convulsions, and be shocked at the noise of its fall.

BEGINNINGS

It is excellent advice both in writing and in action to avoid a too great elevation at first. Let one's beginnings be temperate and unpretending, and the more elevated parts will rise from these with a just and full effect. We were not made to breathe oxygen, or to talk poetry, or to be always wise. We are sorry habitants of an imperfect world, and it will not do for such beings to take admiration by storm. One who would take his friend captive by eloquent discourse must forego the vulgar vanity of a great outset, which cannot last, but dwindles down to flatness and disgust. He must lull the suspicion of art asleep by the unambitious use of familiar commonplaces. He must be willing to say, "How do you do?" and "What's the news?" He must

not disdain to be interested in the weather or the time of day. And when the talk has gradually got into those channels where he wished to lead it, knowledge that is in place and fervour that is well-timed will have their reward.

ACTION AND THOUGHT

Forms are not unimportant in society. It is supremely necessary that you regulate men's conduct, whether you can affect their principles or no. For the thoughts of the mass of men are ever in a crude, ungrown, unready state, but their actions regular and ready. They *must act;* but there is no compulsion to *think*. Therefore, when the understanding is sluggish and indicates no course of conduct, they are forced to obey example, and surrender the whole ordering of life to the judgments of other men. Thus a whole community go to church; acquiesce in the existence of a certain law, or in the government of a certain ruler, while, if their hearts were all read, it might appear that these institutions had but a few strong favourers, and that, for the rest, each man leaned on his neighbour; nay, a critical inquiry should make it plain that the majority of opinions rebelled in secret against the custom complied with, but that doubts were too shadowy

and unformed to venture to challenge an old established mode.

Men, in fact, so openly borrow their common modes of thinking, i. e. those outside modes on which their actions depend (for, when they act in a certain way, they commonly go armed with some obvious reason, whether they believe it or no) that it is surprising how small an amount of originality of mind is required to circulate all the thought in a community. The common conversation that has place in a city for a year does not embrace more intelligence than one vigorous thinker might originate; and one who carefully considers the flow and progress of opinion from man to man and rank to rank through society, will soon discover that three or four masters present the people with all that moderate stock of conclusions upon politics, religion, commerce, and sentiment which goes current. The kingdom of thought is a proud aristocracy.

BURKE, FOX, PITT

England had three great names in her parliament [1790] — Burke, Fox, and Pitt. The two latter interest us by the engaging shew of youthful might. They seem to be beardless boys, abandoning their college with youthful

impatience to mix with men; they come among the gray-haired statesmen, who are aghast at the storm which gathers around, and fearlessly grasp and hurl the thunderbolts of power with graceful majesty. Fox took his seat in parliament at nineteen years of age. Pitt was prime minister of England at twenty-four. Burke, who lacked the aristocratical interest to back him, which Fox, who descended from Henry IV of Navarre, and Pitt, who was son of Chatham, could muster—was somewhat later. The two former were friends; true-hearted and noble friends, so matched as the world hath seldom seen, and so parted as we would hardly have had it otherwise. They were two large and philosophical understandings, both lit with the fire of eloquence. Fox, with tears in his eyes, lamented in parliament that an uninterrupted friendship of twenty-three years should be invaded by the intemperance of a debate, and that his friend should have applied such violent and angry epithets to his name. Burke said he did not recollect any epithets. The reply of Fox was in the spirit of a gentleman. "My honourable friend has forgotten the epithets, they are out of his mind, and they are out of mine forever."

Burke's *principle* was dearer to him even than his friend, and he broke with a stoic's heart his ancient attachment. Burke said afterwards of Fox, "he was a man made to be loved." And Goldsmith said of Burke,

> "Who, born for the universe, narrowed his mind,
> And to *party* gave up what was meant for mankind."

It is not easy, for a common mind, perhaps it is not possible, to appreciate this magnanimous sacrifice (of his friendship). No man perhaps was ever fitter to enjoy fully this best and purest of pleasures. F[ox] and B[urke] agreed upon the American [question], and their foresight triumphed over their adversaries, who laughed at the "vagrant Congress, one Hancock, one Adams, and their crew," who spurned them, when they "might have been led," as Franklin told them, "by a thread," until they broke chains and scattered armaments like flaxen strings. In the dark tempest of the French Revolution, Pitt was "the pilot that weathered the storm." Fox, in Westminster Abbey, lies eighteen inches from Pitt, and close by Chatham.

Pitt, Fox, Burke:—since one was in office, one in favour, and one in neither, perhaps it is just to say, Pitt was a practical statesman, Fox, a

theoretical statesman, and Burke, a philosophic statesman.

FRANKLIN

Franklin was political economist, a natural philosopher, a moral philosopher, and a statesman; invests and dismisses subtle theories (e. g. of the Earth) with extraordinary ease. Unconscious of any mental effort in detailing the profoundest solutions of phenomena, and therefore makes no parade. He writes to a friend when [aged] 80, "I feel as if I was intruding among posterity when I ought to be abed and asleep. I look upon death to be as necessary to the constitution as sleep. We shall rise refreshed in the morning." "Many," said he, "forgive injuries, but none ever forgave contempt." (See *Edinburgh Review*.) That age abounded in greatness,—Carnot, Moreau, Bonaparte, etc.; Johnson, Gibbon, etc.; Washington, etc.

Institutions are a sort of homes. A man may wander long with profit, if he come home at last, but a perpetual vagrant is not honoured. Men may alter and improve their laws, so they fix them at last.

"Humanity does not consist in a squeamish ear." Fox.

Men in this age do not produce new works, but admire old ones; are content to leave the fresh pastures awhile and to chew the cud of thought in the shade.

"A great empire, like a great cake, is most easily diminished at the edges." FRANKLIN.

[A few extracts from entries, made by Emerson in 1823 in his Blotting Book XVIII (2d), are appended here. These entries are largely his notes on his reading, or quotations from the authors. The verse which follows is, however, original.]

When Fortune decks old Learning's naked shrine
And bids his cobwebbed libraries be fine,
Young Merit smooths his aspect to a smile,
And fated Genius deigns to live awhile.

The Prophet, speaking of the Egyptians, says—"Their strength is to sit still." This is a profound remark in its application to certain states and the characters of individuals. It may be added in confirmation of the prophet's asser-

tion, that it was proverbially impossible (in the III century) to extort a secret from an Egyptian by torture.[1]

THE FARMER

"We may talk what we please of lilies and lions rampant, and spread eagles in fields *d'or* or *d'argent;* but if heraldry were guided by reason, a plough in a field arable would be the most noble and ancient arms." COWLEY.

Agriculture is the venerable Mother of all the arts, and compared with the pastoral or the hunting life is certainly friendly to the mind; it is next to commerce in this respect, but must necessarily precede commerce in the growth of society. Virtue and good sense and a contemplative turn are universally characteristic of an agricultural people. In the city, "those who think must govern those who toil"; in the country, the labourers both toil and govern.

1 This proverb was a favourite of Mr. Emerson's through life, variously applied. When it was proposed to him to make a visit, perhaps, or to venture some unusual experiment on the farm, or unwonted household expenditure, he would smile and say, "The strength of the Egyptians is to sit still."

PHILOSOPHIC IMAGINATION

Buckminster was remarkable for a "philosophic imagination." [1] It is the most popular and useful quality which a modern scholar can possess to become a favourite in society. It imparts a spirit of liberal philosophy which can impress itself by the applying of beautiful images. Its advantage is owing to the circumstance that moral reflections are vague and fugitive, whereas the most vulgar mind can readily retain a striking image from the material world. Many men might say "that the labours of the mind must be occasionally relaxed," and it was easily forgotten, but when one said "*Non semper arcum tendit Apollo*," it served to imprint the truth, and is ever remembered. That "great minds are unlike each other and do not appear twice in the world,"—men might hear and forget, until it was established by the adage that "Nature has broken the mould in which she made them." It is better for popularity than scientific sagacity, for it is more easily appreciated. One is at a

1 Probably the younger Buckminster (Joseph Stevens), the pastor of the Brattle Street Church, contemporary and friend of Mr. Emerson's father, and associated with him in the *Anthology*, the first important literary magazine of New England.

loss to say if Bacon had it or no; he is not precisely the mind at which the term points, because he had more of the philosopher than the poet, which is the reverse of Everett, Buckminster, Bancroft—and is superior to them.

LUXURY

Saw you ever luxury? He is not attired in gold, but in *green*, and his diadem is not of gems, but of wild flowers.

LETTER TO HIS AUNT, MARY MOODY EMERSON

Canterbury, *November* 11, 1823.

As to metaphysical difficulties that stagger us,—does not the Divinity make himself amenable, at least in those works and laws that come under our eye, to the (*cultivated*) reason which he has lit up in his creatures? If his *material* operations be irregular, as in the promulgation of gospel, we say, it is to aid some mighty moral design. But if his moral operations be irregular (or appear so to our profoundest study); if justice be mixed with injustice; if unequal conditions be yoked under the same decree; what shall his creatures do? Can they affix an unshaken and accurate sense to moral distinctions, when from the insecure and unsatis-

factory tenure by which we hold all our ideas, our firmest faith in intellectual and moral truths sometimes passes away like the morning cloud before the queries of the sceptic? It was one of my youngest thoughts that God would not confound the weak-eyed understandings of his children whilst they read on earth the alphabet of morals.

Do people feel firmer or fainter in their faith as they grow older and think more? . . . Does not the philosophy of moments ever tamper with the faith of years? Does not the solid universe, Memory, the economy of matter, the economy of mind, sometimes so fade into a false mist that it is possible it may indeed be no more substantial? There seem to be two ways of shaking off this nightmare, viz., a larger acquaintance with matter, or with mind. . . .

. . . An acquaintance with mind, indefatigable pursuit and accumulation of all demonstrable truths; science, deep and high and broad as Newton's, may ally consciousness to so many certain truths; may extend our vantage ground of existence so widely and tie it with so many fast knots to such a various multitude of thoughts as to confirm our hold. A man with one proposition can hardly go far in its illustration or defence, and his knowledge increases in a far

faster proportion than the number of single propositions he amasses,[1] because he continually discerns new connexions and inferences growing out of and between them. And Newton's bright eye, which glanced in every direction into the vast Universe, and saw each fact corroborated by correspondencies springing up on every side, was perhaps wholly absorbed in the extent, the consistency and beauty of the show, too much absorbed to have leisure or inclination to doubt. Not to be despised was that grave, modest, profound old man, that ape whom angels shew;[2] he is a compensation to the race for many generations of darkness, and countries of barbarism. We can set Newton over against Juggernaut. — Nevertheless, admiration is the foible of ignorant and sanguine minds: admiration paid by a few gazers to one sage's intellectual supremacy will hardly be counted in the eye of the Philanthropists any

1 V. Stewart. (R. W. E.)

2 The expression "ape whom angels shew" is probably a quotation from his Aunt's letter, original, or borrowed by her. Her rhetoric was daring. In a later letter from her, speaking of angels, she writes, "They may shew a Newton as an ape of their *knowledge*, but these sublime feelings are of their very nature."

atonement for the squalid and desperate ignorance of untold millions who breathe the breath of misery in Asia, Africa, yea, in the great globe. Why is this?

METRIC SYSTEM

Weights and measures are made interesting by the philosophical radicalism with which the French Revolutionary authorities took up the subject, and by Mr. Adams's report. After inspecting a decimal system, the mere recitation of one of the vulgar tables (of Long Measure for example) is ridiculous. . . . The ancient systems which were arbitrary like ours, cannot be now accurately ascertained. But if such an order were once established as this, it would be easy to perpetuate it through any political convulsions, and to recover it if lost. But so inveterate is men's prejudice for a pound, and so shocking is the innovation of a barbarous *kilometre*, that this philanthropic plan is premature.

A Salem merchant who traded with the natives of one of the East India islands for spices is said to have made some thousands in this manner. The natives had no pound weight to measure their spices with. "Oh," said the American, "my foot weighs just a pound," and

put it on the scale. As may be supposed, he got 5 lb. weight or more at the price of each pound.

Earl Carnarvon's speech (before the House of Peers, Dec. 23, 1678) is a curious piece of English history:[1]—

"My Lords, I don't know Latin, but I do know English, and I know something of English history; and I know also what has become of those who have charged themselves with impeachments. I will begin no farther back than the latter part of Queen Elizabeth's time. Sir Walter Raleigh, your Lordships all know, ran down the Earl of Essex; and you all know what became of Sir Walter Raleigh. Chancellor

1 The version given in the journal is from memory and full of errors and omissions. So I give it in the form he gave it (in his book of Extracts, T), altered by him to make it effective as a declamation, for which purpose he taught it to me. His note on the speech is as follows: "It was proposed to impeach the Earl of Danby. While the House of Peers were deliberating on this subject, the Earl of Carnarvon entered, having just come from a drunken revel, where he had sworn over his claret, that, although he had never spoken before in the House, he would go there directly and make a speech upon whatever subject should happen to be before the house." (E. W. E.)

Bacon, you all know, ran down Sir Walter Raleigh; and your Lordships all know what became of the Chancellor. The Duke of Buckingham ran down Lord Bacon; and you all know what became of the Duke of Buckingham. Sir Thomas Wentworth, afterwards Earl of Strafford, ran down the Duke of Buckingham; and you all know what became of him. Sir Harry Vane ran down the Earl of Strafford; and your Lordships all know what became of Sir Harry Vane. Sir Edward Hyde ran down Sir Harry Vane; and your Lordships all know what became of Sir Edward Hyde. The Earl of Danby ran down Sir Edward Hyde; and what will become of the Earl of Danby your Lordships only can tell. But let the man dare to present himself who will run down the Earl of Danby,—and we shall soon see what will become of that man." [1]

1 Mr. Emerson refers for the speech to Cobbett's *Parliamentary History of England*, vol. iv, page (or rather, column) 1073, where, in the record of this impeachment, it is referred to as "the Earl of Carnarvon's remarkable speech thereon." Cobbett states that the Earl had, at the revel, been "excited to display his abilities by the Duke of Buckingham, who meant no favour to the Treasurer, but only ridicule." So, at the end, "this being pronounced with a remarkable humour and tone, the Duke of Buckingham, both surprised

CHAUNCY AND WHITEFIELD

"Where are you going, Mr. Whitefield?" said Dr. Chauncy. "I 'm going to Boston, Sir."— "I 'm very sorry for it," said Dr. C. "So is the Devil," replied the eloquent preacher.[1]

EXTRACTS FROM A LETTER FROM HIS AUNT MARY

. . . "Is the Muse become faint and mean? Ah well she may, and better, far better, leave you wholly than weave a garland for one whose destiny leads to sensation rather than to sentiment; whose intervals of mentality seem rather spent in collecting facts than energising itself —in unfolding, imperating, its budding powers

and disappointed, cried out, 'The man is inspired! and claret has done the business.' The majority, however, was against the commitment."

1 Rev. Charles Chauncy, pastor of the First Church, was a divine respected and beloved in Boston in the latter half of the eighteenth century. It seems that the popular excitement wrought by George Whitefield, the eloquent English revivalist, with his reactionary influence towards Calvinism, troubled the good Doctor, and moreover the emotional and sensational quality of his preaching disturbed his Boston sensibilities.

Mr. Emerson, in his Essay on "Old Age" (*Society and Solitude*), gives the testimony of President John Adams as to Whitefield's eloquence.

after the sure yet far distant glories of what Plato, Plotinus, and such godlike worthies, who, in the language of St. Austin, showed that none could be a true philosopher that was not abstracted in spirit from all the effects of the body, etc., etc., more than I dare to impose. Yet it is verily valuable to find the principles of the human constitution the same, when developed by philosophy in all ages and nations — to find that, after all its dissections, at bottom is an insatiable thirst for what they denominate 'a state of mind being unable to stay, after its highest flights, till it arrive at a being of unbounded greatness and worth!' O, would the Muse forever leave you till you had prepared for her a celestial abode. Poetry, that soul of all that pleases — the philosophy of the world of sense — yet the Iris — the bearer of the resemblances of uncreated beauty! Yet with these gifts you flag — your Muse is mean because the breath of fashion has not puffed her. You are not inspired in heart, with a gift for immortality, because you are the nurseling of surrounding circumstances. You become yourself a part of the events which make up the ordinary life — even that part of the economy of living which relates, in the order of things, necessarily to private and social affections, rather than to pub-

lic and disinterested. Still, there is an approaching period I dread worse than this sweet stagnation, when the Muse shall be dragged into *éclat*. . . . Then will be the time when the guardian angel will tremble. In case of failing, of becoming deceived and vain, there will yet remain a hope that your fall may call down some uncommon effort of mercy, and you may rise from the love of deceitful good to that of real. Had you been placed in circumstances of hard fare for the belly —labour and solitude—it does seem you would have been training for those most insidious enemies which will beset your public life on every hand. How little you will be armed with the saying of a French divine of highest order, 'that it is safest for a popular character to know but part of what is said.'

You provoke me to prose by eulogising Cæsar and Cicero. True, the speech you quote (I believe—'You bear Cæsar and his fortune') is sublime, and instanced by Christians, but for him, for that tyrant (whose only charm, the love of letters, was not accompanied by enthusiasm) it was mere rant, or he was thinking of the egg from which Venus sprung (which was preserved by fishes and hatched by doves) to whom he was a most debauched devotee. As to Cicero,

one wants to admire him, but different accounts forbid — tho' none are favourable enow ever to place him one moment beyond the imperious controul of passing events. Dejected in adversity, and without any respite from age or experience — pursuing, begging, other people to let him be praised. Is not this enough to neutralize those effects for the public, as we know not their motive to be beyond emulation? His eloquence, it is true, is glorious, but himself remains an object of pity, and the only apology for becoming the meanest of scavengers is that in company with genius is the love of fame, and he knew of no object hereafter to feed it. Such are the men you are more excited by than by your heroic ancestor![1] 'Pomp of circumstance.' Merciful Creator! this child, so young, so well born and bred, yet so wedded to sounds and places where human passions triumphed! When he knows that spots, the most famous even by thine own appearances, are swept out of record! . . .

1 Rev. William Emerson, the young minister of Concord. This eager and eloquent "Son of Liberty," at the outbreak of the Revolution, served as chaplain in the Provincial Camp at Cambridge, and later was regularly appointed chaplain of a Massachusetts regiment at Ticonderoga, where he contracted the fever of which he died.

Whoever wants power must pay for it. How unnatural — one man asks another to give him up his rights; this is the nakedness of the traffic, and if there be ever so much fraud and violence, after ages produce slaves enow to celebrate their conquerors. As to words or languages being so important — I 'll have nothing of it. The images, the sweet immortal images are within us — born there, our native right, and sometimes one kind of sounding word or syllable awakens the instrument of our souls, and sometimes another. But we are not slaves to sense any more than to political usurpers, but by fashion and imbecility. Aye, if I understand you, so you think.

Sorry you meditate a reform in drama, which will oblige you to go thro' such bogs and fens and sloughs of passion and crime. True, one ought to sacrifice himself to the public, but how long and poisonous the execution compared to that of other martyrs ! Still, if by plucking up those principles of human nature which have made dramas agreeable to the populace, and which have been sometimes considered as drains to human vices, or preventatives to worse places, —if you pull down old establishments which have found place in almost every age and nation of cultivated or semi-barbarous life, — why may

you not undertake it? To men in general, it would seem gigantic. And to me, who am, if possible, more ignorant on the history and character of drama than any other subjects [it] seems a less useful exercise, as respects the reformer, than any scientific or literary pursuit. Mathematics and languages remain with one for use and ornament, and all the universe of facts which are connecting will some time or other prove something; and if they don't, they are apologies for higher. The picture of a bud is better than the idle jokes and saturnine gossip of ordinary society.

There is one idea of dramatic representation interesting, that of Eichhorn respecting the Apocalypse of St. John. The learned German, you know, believes all passed in Patmos in scenic order. And why may not this be a key to many revelations? In the infancy of the world, men were taught by signs. It would seem that the higher and last-made instructions from Heaven applied to Reason as well as sentiment, and I am glad to escape from all sorts of earthly dramas."

PRIESTCRAFT

Men are so essentially alike, that, if you do not radically alter their institutions, you will find

the same habits recurring monotonously from century to century. Friars and monks of the Roman priesthood very closely resemble the country clergy of New England, notwithstanding the very considerable progress of public opinion through a score of generations. The town clergy, no doubt, are a vast many degrees higher, but they may perhaps fitly represent the eminent abbots whom public admiration elevated to the episcopal and archiepiscopal thrones of Rome, Constantinople, Paris, and London. If one be curious enough to notice the topics and turn of conversation, and the ability wherewith 't is managed by clergymen in mixed or chosen company, I think he will not be struck with any distinct marks of excellence, or see that thoughts are broached to-day which might not be suggested in the tea-table talk of a thousand years ago.

Whitefield was as good and as bad as Peter the Hermit; Mr. Channing, and Mr. Norton, and Mr. Buckminster make good the place of Athanasius, St. Cyril, and Bernard (the name, I think, of the hermit of Abelard's time), and Mr. Everett will serve for many a polite and dignified archbishop who staid at home and kept his choice rhetoric for the ear of kings. . . .

No doubt beneficent and devout hearts have in humble spheres regenerated generations and the world. But I complain of the great multitude of the laxer sort. . . . But all the world complains. "Let each," said Franklin, "take care to mend one." I add, 't is worth while to notice how the black coats wind their way into the foremost ranks of the proudest company.

What can the reason be why a priest of whatever god, under whatever form, should in every clime and age be open to such liberal abuse, and to ineradicable suspicion? Is the reason to be found in Ecclesiastical History? Questionless this has been very bad. The pious professors have been outrageous rogues in a thousand temples from Memphis to Boston. Or is its origin deeper fixed in the nature of the profession? . . .

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"Bonus vir tempore tantum a Deo differt."

SENECA.

"Nor fetch my precepts from the Cynic's tub."

CANTERBURY, *February* 17, 1824.

"*La nature*," says Pascal, "*confond les pyrrhoniens, et la raison confond les dogmatistes.*" And Sir J. Mackintosh calls the sentence the sublimest of human composition. It is fortunate and happy, but a sublimity not difficult to gain, as it did not occur to Pascal when he first revolved the subject, but is the last generalization at which he arrives. And it is easier to build up one subject into a cone with a broad base of examples narrowing up into a formula expressing a general truth, than to detach subtle facts from subjects partially known. . . .

PRAISE

"Please to praise me" is the ill disguised request of almost all literary men. All men are cheered by applause and vexed by censure:

. . . "Nihil est quod credere de se
Non possit."

JUVENAL.

But literary men alone cannot do without it. The reason is obvious. Other men toil for gold and get gold for their toil, but scholars cannot get gold, and appetite in them craves another food. They are no more insatiable for their proper reward than are the pursuers of Mammon for theirs. But why are the askers of praise ridiculous, and not the askers of silver? (*Minor negatur.*)

. . . . . .

In education it seems to be safer to praise than to censure abundantly. For myself, I have ever been elated to an active mind by flattery and depressed by dispraise. Perhaps a Muse that soared on a stronger wing would scorn to be so slightly disheartened. I like the lines —

"Praise is the salt that seasons right in man
And whets the appetite of moral good."

YOUNG.

It is noticeable how much a man is judged of by the praise he gives. It is best not to be too inflammable, not to be lavish of your praise on light occasions, for it will be remembered long

after your fervent admiration has cooled into disgust. Milton was very frugal of his praise. A man is not more known by the company he keeps. *Dat veniam corvis, vexat censura columbas* — is a decisive index of perverted character.

[INVENTIONS]

Pliny's uncle had a slave read while he eat. In the progress of Watt and Perkins's[1] philosophy, the day may come when the scholar shall be provided with a Reading Steam-Engine; when he shall say "*Presto*," and it shall discourse eloquent history, and "*Stop, Sesame*," and it shall hush to let him think. He shall put in a pin, and hear poetry; and two pins and hear a song. That age will discover Laputa.

ASIA. ORIGIN

February 20.

"*Tout commence*," says Father Bossuet, of the first ages. All has the air of beginning. They form societies, devise arts, polish manners, and make laws. This return to the cradle is useful. Now, when all things are tried and trite, when

1 Jacob Perkins, the ingenious American (1766–1849) who invented the nail-making machine, improvements in engraving, the steam-gun (self-feeding), and other machines.

Shem, Ham, and Japhet have strayed from their paternal tent as far as the limits of the globe will let them, and on the mind of each is writ in indelible lines his character, now the Spirit of Humanity finds it curious and good to leave the armchair of its old age and go back to the scenes of Auld Lang Syne, to the old mansion house of Asia, the playground of its childhood, the land of distant but cherished remembrance. That spot must needs be dear where the faculties first opened, where youth first triumphed in the elasticity of strength and spirits, and where the ways of civilization and thought (*then deemed infinite*) were first explored.

It brings the mind palpable relief, to withdraw it from the noisy and overgrown world to these peaceful primeval solitudes. For this reason, perhaps, there is a species of grandeur in *Premier Epoque* of Bossuet, though it relates a threadbare tale. It may be, this emotion will be only occasionally felt, for though the grandeur is real, it is ever present, as the firmament is forever magnificent, but is only felt to be so when our own spirits are fresh (and buoyant). Asia, Africa, Europe, old, leprous and wicked, have run round the goal of centuries till we[1] are tired and they

1 "*We*" means, beings better than we. (R. W. E.)

are ready to drop. But now a strong man has entered the race and is outstripping them all. Strong man! youth and glory are with thee. As thou wouldst prosper, forget not the hope of mankind. Trample not upon thy competitors, though unworthy. Europe is thy father, bear him on thy Atlantean shoulders. Asia, thy grandsire, — regenerate him. Africa, their ancient, abused bondsman, — give him his freedom. . . .

AULD LANG SYNE

In the beginning, which I spake of a few lines above, there was some good. Would it not have been well to have lived in Nineveh, or to have been the mighty hunter, or to have floated on the Deluge, or have been dead before? Hope, at least, would have been a contemporary. Now she has long been dead or doating — as good as dead. Moreover, men's thoughts were their own then. Noah was not dinned to death with Aristotle and Bacon and Greece and Rome. The patriarchs were never puzzled with libraries of names and dates, with First ages and Dark ages; and Revivals, and upper empires and lower empires; with the balance of power and the balance of trade; with fighting chronologies and dagger-drawing creeds. Life is wasted in the

necessary preparation of finding which is the true way, and we die just as we enter it. An Antediluvian had the advantage — an advantage that has been growing scarce as the world has grown older — of forming his own opinion and indulging his own hope, without danger of contradiction from Time that never had elapsed, or observation that never had been made.

NOWADAYS. EDUCATION

Unknown troubles perplex the lot of the scholar whose inexpressible unhappiness it is to be born at this day. He is born in a time of *war*. A thousand religions are in arms. Systems of education are contesting. Literature, Politics, Morals, and Physics are each engaged in loud civil broil. A chaos of doubts besets him from his outset. Shall he read, or shall he think? Ask the wise. The wise have not determined. Shall he nourish his faculties in solitude or in active life? No man can answer. He turns to books — the vast amount of recorded wisdom, but it is useless from its amount. He cannot read all;[1] no, not in Methuselah's multiplied days; — but how to choose — *hoc opus est*. Must he

1 One had need read as Pliny elder, to accomplish anything. (R. W. E.)

read History and neglect Morals; or learn what *ought to be*, in ignorance of what *has been?* Or must he slight both in the pursuit of (physical) science; or all, for practical knowledge and a profession? Must he, in a last alternative, abandon all the rest, to be profoundly skilled in a single branch of art, or, understanding none, smatter superficially in all?

A question of equal moment to each new citizen of the world is this: shall I subdue my mind by discipline, or obey its native inclinations? govern my imagination with rules, or cherish its originality. Shall I cultivate Reason or Fancy, educate one power with concentrated diligence or reduce all to the same level? . . .

These and similar questions are a real and recurring calamity. I do not know that it were extravagant to say that half of the time of most scholars is dissipated in fruitless and vexatious attempts to solve one or another of [such questions] in succession. It is an evil oftener felt than stated. It is an evil that demands a remedy. It requires that what master minds have done for some of the Sciences, should be done for Education. Teach us no more arts, but how those which are already should be learned.

MORAL BEAUTY

February 20.

Material beauty perishes or palls. Intellectual beauty limits admiration to seasons and ages; hath its ebbs and flows of delight. . . . But moral beauty is lovely, imperishable, perfect. It is dear to the child and to the patriarch, to Heaven, Angel, Man. . . . None that can understand Milton's *Comus* can read it without warming to the holy emotions it panegyrizes.

I would freely give all I ever hoped to be, even when my air-blown hopes were brilliant and glorious, — not as now — to have given down that sweet strain to posterity to do good in a golden way. . . . The service that such books as this, and the *Prelaty* and Bunyan, &c., render, is not appreciable, but it is immense. These books go up and down the world on the errand of charity. . . . They pluck away the thorn from Virtue's martyr crown and plant the rose and amaranth instead. Of this I am glad. I am glad to find at least *one* unfading, essential, beneficent principle in human nature — the approval of right; and that it is so strong and ineffaceable. . . . Popular preachers . . . have won the understanding by getting on the

right side of the heart. I am ignorant if, in saying this, I analyze Bancroft's eloquence. His sermon on Temperance was of powerful effect, but it seemed to reach the practice through an appeal to this moral poetry. Thus, one fine sentiment in it, that was calculated to produce much fasting, was the representation of the body as the corruptible and perishable channel, through which flowed for a season the streams of immortal thought.[1]

SENTIMENT

Canterbury, *February* 22, 1824.

The war between sentiment and reason is the perpetual wonder that lasts the "nine days" of human life. When we calmly think and precisely reason, our life (ever enigmatical enow) has most of sense and design; there is an arrangement perceived in education, and a growth in mind. But when we *feel* strongly, when we *love* woman or man, when we hope, or fear, or hate, or

1 Perhaps this was the origin of the early poem, beginning,

> O what are heroes, prophets, men,
> But pipes, through which the breath of God doth blow
> A momentary music?

Later, Mr. Emerson chose the classical form, and substituted "Pan," for "God." See poem "Pan," *Poems*, Appendix.

aspire with vehemence, the strength of a sentiment is so engrossing and exclusive that it throws all memory and habit for the moment into a remote background; the delusion waxes so strong that it alone remains real, and all else shows as strong delusion. An educated man, when he is star-gazing or vividly considering for a moment his relations as an eternal being to the world, frequently undervalues, as nugatory, the time and diligence bestowed by him on science and art; forgetting that to this very cultivation he owes that elevation of thought which disgusts him with this world's unsatisfactoriness. . . .

A melancholy dream it is, this succession of rolling weeks, each, like the last, in peevish dissatisfaction and in diminished hope.

"By pain of heart now checked and now impelled,
The intellectual power through words and things
Went sounding on a dim and perilous way."

[CANTERBURY, *February*, 1824.]

Goodbye, proud world, I 'm going home:
Thou 'rt not my friend and I 'm not thine.
Long I 've been tossed like the salt sea foam,
All day mid weary crowds I roam,—
And O my home, O holy home!

Goodbye to Flattery's fawning face,
To Grandeur with his wise grimace,
To upstart Wealth's averted eye,
To supple Office, low and high,
To frozen hearts and hasting feet,
To noisy Toil, to Court and Street,
To those who go, and those who come;
Goodbye, proud World! I'm going home.
I'm going to my own hearthstone,
Bosomed in yon green hills alone;
Sweet summer birds are warbling there.[1]

Metaphysicians are mortified to find how entirely the whole materials of understanding are derived from sense. No man is understood, who speculates on mind or character, until he borrows the emphatic imagery of sense. A mourner will try in vain to explain the extent of his bereavement better than to say, a *chasm* is opened in society. I fear the progress of metaphysical philosophy may be found to consist in nothing

1 The rest of these verses, the "Goodbye," occurs, two months later in date, in this journal. Mr. Emerson sent an improved version, in 1839, to gratify his friend James Freeman Clarke, who published them in *The Western Messenger*. What Mr. Emerson said of them may be found in the letter which he sent with them, in Dr. Holmes's Memoir of him. (*Ralph Waldo Emerson*, American Men of Letters Series, p. 129.)

else than the progressive introduction of opposite metaphors. Thus the Platonists congratulated themselves for ages upon their knowing that Mind was a dark chamber whereon ideas like shadows were painted. Men derided this as infantile when they afterwards learned that the Mind was a sheet of white paper whereon any and all characters might be written. Almost everything in language that is bound up in your memory is of this significant sort. Sleep, the cessation of toil, the loss of volition, etc., what is that? but

"Sleep that knits up the ravelled sleave of Care"

is felt. Life is nothing, but the *lamp* of life that blazes, flutters, and goes out, the *hill* of life which is climbed and tottered down, the *race* of life which is run with a thousand competitors and for a prize proposed, — these are distinctly understood. "We love tellers of good tidings" is faint, but "How beautiful upon the mountains are their feet" is excellent. "The world is the scaffold of Divine Justice," said Saurin.

[COUNTRY]

How do you do, Sir? Very well, Sir. You have a keen air among your rocks and hills. Yes,

Sir. I never saw a country which more delighted me. A man might travel many hundred miles and not find so fine woodlands as abound in this neighbourhood. But the good people who live in them do not esteem them. It is people born in town who are intoxicated with being in the country. It certainly is a good deal like being drunk, the feelings of a cit in the hills. In Cambridge there is some wild land called Sweet Auburn, upwards of a mile from the Colleges, and yet the students will go in bands over a flat sandy road, and in summer evenings the woods are full of them. They are so happy they do not know what to do. They will scatter far and wide, too, among some insignificant whortleberry bushes, pricked with thorns and stung by musquetoes for hours, for the sake of picking a pint of berries; occasionally chewing a bug of indescribable bad relish. You count it nothing more to go among green bushes than on the roads, but those who have been educated in dusty streets enjoy as much sauntering here as you would in the orange groves and cinnamon gardens of the East Indies.

They say there is a tune which is forbidden to be played in the European armies because it makes the Swiss desert, since it reminds them

so forcibly of their hills and home. I have heard many *Swiss tunes* played in college. Balancing between getting and not getting a hard lesson, a breath of fragrant air from the fields coming in at the window would serve as a Swiss tune and make me desert to the glens from which it came. Nor is that vagabond inclination wholly gone yet. And many a sultry afternoon, last summer, I left my Latin and my English to go with my gun and see the rabbits and squirrels and robins in the woods. Goodbye, Sir. Stop a moment. I have heard a clergyman of Maine say that in his Parish are the Penobscot Indians, and that when any one of them in summer has been absent for some weeks a-hunting, he comes back among them a different person and altogether unlike any of the rest, with an eagle's eye, a wild look, and commanding carriage and gesture; but after a few weeks it wears off again into the indolent dronelike apathy which all exhibit. Good day, Sir.

THE PURITANS; MELIORATION OF THE TYPE

Such a change as Hume remarks to have taken place in men's minds, about the reign of James I, may be found also, perhaps, in a complete observation of the early and later books of this coun-

try. The race who fought the Revolution out were obviously not of the same temper and manners as the first comers to the wilderness. They had dropped so much of the puritanism of their sires, that they would hardly have been acknowledged by them as sound members of their rigorous society. This nation is now honourably distinguished above all others for greater moral purity. But the constant intercourse with Europe constantly lessens the distinction; and liberality of religious and political sentiment gains ground rapidly. The great men of our first age were Bradford, Standish, Cotton, Winthrop, Phipps, and Underwood; of our second, the Mathers, John Eliot, Witherspoon, and President Edwards; and of the third, Otis, Adams, Washington, Franklin. Smith of Virginia would not have been admitted to the Plymouth doors, unless, perchance, on account of the slaughter of the three Saracens. Liberality of religion and of politics do not always go hand in hand. For the same Puritans who framed the English Constitution persecuted the Quakers and hanged the witches. The adventurous spirit which distinguished the settlers was begotten by the fanaticism of the Reformation, a spirit which confides in its own strength for the accomplishment of its

ends, and disdains to calculate the chance of failure. It is strange, gratifying, to see how faithfully the feelings of one generation may be propagated to another amid the adverse action of all outward circumstances, poverty, riches, revolution. From the close of Elizabeth's reign, the intolerance and bigotry of the Puritans continued and multiplied until the outbreak in England in 1640 (?), and, in the branch of the stock in America, in the ecclesiastical tyranny. After that effervescence, men corrected the faults of inexperience, and the following generation here were more marked by *good sense*. Gibbon said 't was as rare as genius.

THE BLACKBIRD

The blackbird's song is in my ear,
A summer sound I leap to hear;
Day breaks through yonder dusky cloud
O'er well-known cliffs, those giants proud;
And I am glad the day is come
To greet me in my ancient home.

Rejoice with me, melodious bird,
Whose merry note my childhood heard;
For I 've come back again to see
The wildwoods of mine infancy;
For, O, my home, I thought no more —
. . . . . .

I love the voice of the bird,
And the tree where he builds his nest,
And the grove where man's mirth and man's grief are unheard.
Ye are my home, ye ancient rocks,
Who lift 'mid cedar shades, your rugged crest;
The flowers, like Beauty's golden locks,
Adorn your brow and droop upon your breast.

Mountain and cliff and lake, I am your child;
Ye were the cradle of mine infancy,
The playground of my youth.[1]

He who frequents these scenes, where Nature discloses her magnificence to silence and solitude, will have his mind occupied often by trains of thought of a peculiarly solemn tone, which never interrupted the profligacy of libertines, the money-getting of the miser, or the glory-getting of the ambitious. In the depths of the forest, where the noon comes like twilight, on the cliff, in the cavern, and by the lonely lake, where the

1 The imagery of rock and cedar shows that this outburst of joy in Spring was inspired by the rougher parts of Roxbury, where Emerson for the time dwelt, and whither, as a boy, he had made excursions. As for mountains, Blue Hill was the nearest approach to one, but the young poet felt free to include all wild Nature in his description. Wordsworth's influence seems to appear in the last lines.

sounds of man's mirth and of man's sorrow were never heard, where the squirrel inhabits and the voice of the bird echoes, — is a shrine which few visit in vain, an oracle which returns no ambiguous response. The pilgrim who retires hither wonders how his heart could ever cleave so mightily to the world whose deafening tumult he has left behind. What are temples and towered cities to him? He has come to a sweeter and more desirable creation. When his eye reaches upward by the sides of the piled rocks to the grassy summit, he feels that the magnificence of man is quelled and subdued here. The very leaf under his foot, the little flowers that embroider his path, outdo the art, and outshine the glory of man. . . . Things here assume their natural proportions, before distorted by prejudice. What, in this solitude, are the libraries of learning? The scholar and the peasant are alike in the view which Nature takes of them. The barriers of artificial distinction are broken down. Society's iron sceptre of ceremony is dishonoured here, — here in the footsteps of the invisible, in the bright ruins of the original creation, over which the Morning stars sang together, and where, even now, they shed their sweetest light. Whatsoever beings watch over these inner cham-

bers of Nature, they have not abandoned their charge. Nature never tires of *her* house, and each year its glorious tapestry is newly hung. . . .

[YOUNG AMERICA'S JUDGMENTS]

Youth is not the fault nations soonest mend, and it may be very long before the world's experience can be any wise pronounced mature. What are we who sit in judgment upon our fathers, as if upon a remote and foreign race? Their stripling progeny; inhabiting their hearths, covered with the dust of their prejudices, dressed in their robes and using their wealth. When hundreds of ages shall have rolled away and the scholar's eye shall combine the entire history of a thousand nations in one view, it will be less immodest and more easy to pronounce on the merits of their respective literatures. It will correct our vain pretensions to read often Franklin's scrap called "Ephemeris."

FROM A LETTER TO MISS EMERSON

March 21, 1824.

No fashion is so frantic as to depreciate thought. No change of times or minds has ever occurred to throw too much intellect on the market. The world is very poor amidst the

rich library of all knowledge its vaunting children have bequeathed it. Now, in its ripe and learned old age, come I, its docile child, to be pleased and instructed by its abundant wisdom; but when I open its accepted gospels of thought and learning, its sages and bards, I find they were all fain to spin a spider thread of intellect, to borrow much of each other, to arrive at few results, and to hide or supply meagreness by profuse ornament. I am therefore curious to know what living wit (not perverted by the vulgar rage of writing a book) has suggested or concluded upon the dark sayings and sphinx riddles of philosophy and life; I do beseech your charity not to withhold your pen. I have one more calculation with which I please myself, that if my gross body outlive you, you will bequeath me the legacy of all your recorded thought. I know not to what purpose you should think and write so many years (pardon the coarseness of the phrase) if you design to burn or bury your books, like Prospero. 'T is counted good in the Greek and the Roman to have planted so many fair flowers of fancy on the open road of poetry, for the use and pleasure of all subsequent travellers. He who makes one addition to the stock of thought in circula-

tion among men is a benefactor to an unknown amount, and has not lost his day. If you are too proud to expose the mind's wealth to the vulgar voice of fame (as De Staël has done), you do philanthropy a wrong, and friendship a wrong, to withhold it from men and from a friend. And what will you want of it where you go? Says Faith: If you are to lie for a season in cold obstruction, it will rot by your side. If you wake in glorified existence, you will cease to value these rudiments of the soul. But cast your bread on the waters and you will find it after many days; you may find it in other worlds bearing fruit, and multiplying, as is the nature of thought. Why is the fruit of knowledge sorrow? I have, it may be, a pleasant poetical cast of thought — because I am ignorant. I had a pleasanter and more romantic existence (for such is childhood) whilst I thought the rainbow a symbol and an arch in heaven, and not necessary results of light and eyes, whilst I believed that the country had some essential sacredness, some nobler difference from the town than that one was builded, t' other not. A flower and a butterfly lose every charm when poring science discloses lobes and stomachs, acids and alkalies in their delicate beauty. I dislike to augment my

slender store of chemistry and astronomy, and I think I could have helped the monks to belabour Galileo for saying the everlasting earth moved. Now these few lines are an epitome of the history of knowledge. Every step Science has made — was it not the successive destruction of agreeable delusions which jointly made up no mean portion of human happiness? In metaphysics, "the gymnastics of the soul," what has reason done since Plato's day but rend and tear his gorgeous fabric. And how are we the wiser? Instead of the unmeasurable theatre which we deemed was here opened to the range of the understanding, we are now reduced to a little circle of definitions and logic round which we may humbly run. And how has Faith fared? Why, the Reformer's axe has hewed down idol after idol, and corruption and imperfection, until Faith is bare and very cold. And they have not done stripping yet, but must reach the bone. The old fable said Truth was by gods or men made naked. I wish the gods would help her to a garment or make her fairer. From Eden to America the apples of the tree of knowledge are but bitter fruit in the end.

MYSELF

Sunday, *April* 18, 1824.

"Nil fuit unquam sic dispar sibi."

Horace.

I am beginning my professional studies. In a month I shall be legally a man. And I deliberately dedicate my time, my talents, and my hopes to the Church. Man is an animal that looks before and after; and I should be loth to reflect at a remote period that I took so solemn a step in my existence without some careful examination of my past and present life. Since I cannot alter, I would not repent the resolution I have made, and this page must be witness to the latest year of my life whether I have good grounds to warrant my determination.

I cannot dissemble that my abilities are below my ambition. And I find that I judged by a false criterion when I measured my powers by my ability to understand and to criticize the intellectual character of another. For men graduate their respect, not by the secret wealth, but by the outward use; not by the power to understand, but by the power to act. I have, or had, a strong imagination, and consequently a keen relish for the beauties of poetry. The exercise which the

practice of composition gives to this faculty is the cause of my immoderate fondness for writing, which has swelled these pages to a voluminous extent. My reasoning faculty is proportionably weak, nor can I ever hope to write a Butler's Analogy or an Essay of Hume. Nor is it strange that with this confession I should choose theology, which is from everlasting to everlasting "debateable ground." For, the highest species of reasoning upon divine subjects is rather the fruit of a sort of moral imagination, than of the "Reasoning Machines," such as Locke and Clarke and David Hume. Dr. Channing's Dudleian Lecture is the model of what I mean, and the faculty which produced this is akin to the higher flights of the fancy. I may add that the preaching most in vogue at the present day depends chiefly on imagination for its success, and asks those accomplishments which I believe are most within my grasp. I have set down little which can gratify my vanity, and I must further say that every comparison of myself with my mates that six or seven, perhaps sixteen or seventeen, years have made, has convinced me that there exists a signal defect of character which neutralizes in great part the just influence my talents ought to have. Whether that defect be in the

address, in the fault of good forms, — which, Queen Isabella said, were like perpetual letters-commendatory — or deeper seated in an absence of common *sympathies*, or even in a levity of the understanding, I cannot tell. But its bitter fruits are a sore uneasiness in the company of most men and women, a frigid fear of offending and jealousy of disrespect, an inability to lead and an unwillingness to follow the current conversation, which contrive to make me second with all those among whom chiefly I wish to be first.

Hence my bearing in the world is the direct opposite of that good-humoured independence and self-esteem which should mark the gentleman. Be it here remembered that there is a decent pride which is conspicuous in the perfect model of a Christian man. I am unfortunate also, as was Rienzi, in a propensity to laugh, or rather, snicker. I am ill at ease, therefore, among men. I criticize with hardness; I lavishly applaud; I weakly argue; and I wonder with a "foolish face of praise."

Now the profession of law demands a good deal of personal address, an impregnable confidence in one's own powers, upon all occasions expected and unexpected, and a logical mode of thinking and speaking — which I do not possess,

and may not reasonably hope to obtain. Medicine also makes large demands on the practitioner for a seducing mannerism. And I have no taste for the pestle and mortar, for Bell on the bones, or Hunter, or Celsus.

But in Divinity I hope to thrive. I inherit from my sire a formality of manner and speech, but I derive from him, or his patriotic parent, a passionate love for the strains of eloquence. I burn after the "*aliquid immensum infinitumque*" which Cicero desired. What we ardently love we learn to imitate. My understanding venerates and my heart loves that cause which is dear to God and man — the laws of morals, the Revelations which sanction, and the blood of martyrs and triumphant suffering of the saints which seal them. In my better hours, I am the believer (if not the dupe) of brilliant promises, and can respect myself as the possessor of those powers which command the reason and passions of the multitude. The office of a clergyman is twofold: public preaching and private influence. Entire success in the first is the lot of few, but this I am encouraged to expect. If, however, the individual himself lack that moral worth which is to secure the last, his studies upon the first are idly spent. The most prodigious genius, a seraph's

eloquence, will shamefully defeat its own end, if it has not first won the heart of the defender to the cause he defends. But the coolest reason cannot censure my choice when I oblige myself *professionally* to a life which all wise men freely and advisedly adopt. I put no great restraint on myself, and can therefore claim little merit in a manner of life which chimes with inclination and habit. But I would learn to love virtue for her own sake. I would have my pen so guided as was Milton's when a deep and enthusiastic love of goodness and of God dictated the *Comus* to the bard, or that prose rhapsody in the Third Book of Prelaty. I would sacrifice inclination to the interest of mind and soul. I would remember that

"Spare Fast oft with Gods doth diet,"

that Justinian devoted but one out of twenty-four hours to sleep, and this week (for instance) I will remember to curtail my dinner and supper sensibly and rise from table each day with an appetite, till Tuesday evening next, and so see if it be a fact that I can understand more clearly.

I have mentioned a defect of character; perhaps it is not one, but many. Every wise man

aims at an entire conquest of himself. We applaud, as possessed of extraordinary good sense, one who never makes the slightest mistake in speech or action; one in whom not only every important step of life, but every passage of conversation, every duty of the day, even every movement of every muscle — hands, feet, and tongue, are measured and dictated by deliberate reason. I am not assuredly that excellent creature. A score of words and deeds issue from me daily, of which I am not the master. They are begotten of weakness and born of shame. I cannot assume the elevation I ought, — but lose the influence I should exert among those of meaner or younger understanding, for want of sufficient *bottom* in my nature, for want of that confidence of manner which springs from an erect mind which is without fear and without reproach. In my frequent humiliation, even before women and children, I am compelled to remember the poor boy who cried, "I told you, Father, they would find me out." Even those feelings which are counted noble and generous take in me the taint of frailty. For my strong propensity to friendship, instead of working out its manly ends, degenerates to a fondness for particular casts of feature, perchance not unlike the doting

of old King James. Stateliness and silence hang very like Mokannah's suspicious silver veil, only concealing what is best not shewn. What is called a warm heart, I have not.

The stern accuser Conscience cries that the catalogue of confessions is not yet full. I am a lover of indolence, and of the belly. And the good have a right to ask the neophyte who wears this garment of scarlet sin, why he comes where all are apparelled in white? Dares he hope that some patches of pure and generous feeling, some bright fragments of lofty thought, it may be of divine poesy, shall charm the eye away from all the particoloured shades of his character? And when he is clothed in the vestments of the priest, and has inscribed on his forehead "Holiness to the Lord," and wears on his breast the breast-plate of the tribes, then can the Ethiopian change his skin, and the unclean be pure? Or how shall I strenuously enforce on men the duties and habits to which I am a stranger? Physician, heal thyself; I need not go far for an answer to so natural a question. I am young in my everlasting existence. I already discern the deep dye of elementary errors, which threaten to colour its infinity of duration. And I judge that if I devote my nights and days *in form*, to the service of

God and the War against Sin, I shall soon be prepared to do the same *in substance*.

I cannot accurately estimate my chances of success, in my profession, and in life. Were it just to judge the future from the past, they would be very low. In my case, I think it is not. I have never expected success in my present employment. My scholars are carefully instructed, my money is faithfully earned, but the instructor is little wiser, and the duties were never congenial with my disposition. Thus far the dupe of Hope, I have trudged on with my bundle at my back, and my eye fixed on the distant hill where my burden would fall. It may be I shall write *dupe* a long time to come, and the end of life shall intervene betwixt me and the release. My trust is that my profession shall be my regeneration of mind, manners, inward and outward estate; or rather my starting-point, for I have hoped to put on eloquence as a robe, and by goodness and zeal and the awfulness of Virtue to press and prevail over the false judgments, the rebel passions and corrupt habits of men. We blame the past, we magnify and gild the future, and are not wiser for the multitude of days. Spin on, ye of the adamantine spindle, spin on, my fragile thread.

[CONTINUATION OF "GOODBYE, PROUD WORLD"]

I 'm going to my own hearthstone,
Bosomed in yon green hills alone,
A secret shrine in a pleasant land,
Whose groves the frolic fairies planned;
Their twilight shade, each summer day
Echoes the blackbird's roundelay,
And vulgar crowds have never trod
A spot that is sacred to Mind and God.
O, when I am safe in my sylvan home,
I tread on the pride of Greece and Rome;
And when I am stretched beneath the pines,
Where the evening star so holy shines,
I laugh at the lore and the pride of man,
At the sophist schools and the learned clan;
For what are they all, in their high conceit,
When man in the bush with God may meet.

TODAY

I rake no coffined clay, nor publish wide
The resurrection of departed pride;
Safe in their ancient crannies, dark and deep,
Let kings and conquerors, saints and soldiers sleep.
Late in the world — too late perchance for fame —
Just late enough to reap abundant blame —
I choose a novel theme, a bold abuse
Of critic charters, an unlaurelled Muse.

Old mouldy men and books and names and lands
Disgust my reason and defile my hands;
I had as lief respect an ancient shoe
As love old things *for age*, and hate the new.
I spurn the Past, my mind disdains its nod,
Nor kneels in homage to so mean a god.
I laugh at those who, while they gape and gaze,
The bald antiquity of China praise.
Youth is (whatever cynic tubs pretend)
The fault that boys and nations soonest mend.

[The following extracts from letters written by Miss Mary Emerson to her nephew, and his to her in reply, should properly be introduced here. They are taken from his journal or extract-book No. XVIII, 2d.

Mr. Emerson in his account of his revered Aunt (*Lectures and Biographical Sketches*), says: "She had the misfortune of spinning with a greater velocity than any of the other tops" in ordinary motion, in conversation, in thought. So in her writing, her thought leaves her expression far behind. She often leaves out letters from words, words from sentences, and does not tarry to finish her thought. Hence her letters and journals are often hard to make out.]

MISS EMERSON TO R. W. E.

[Waterford, Maine,] *April* 13, 1824.

"Imagination will always revolt at the loss of the butterfly's beauty, and the rude waste of the rich dew of the welkin from its own azure cups, — but be patient. There are many who are forced to creep thro' the entrails of reptiles and roots to find an infinite Designer. Never dislike their little lobes and [sic], and all their capacities to enjoy the raptures of sense, for they afford so much comfort to those who seek for analogies, and who are otherwise [rather?] related to the amiable instincts of animals than to the lofty relations of reason and principle in the higher orders. The longer you live, the more you will have to endure the elementary existence of society, and your premature wisdom will distaste quiescence, when the old become gay and the young grave at the portraiture of a fly and the Galen dissection of a flower. Then you find no necessary sacredness in the country. Nor did Milton, but his mind and his spirit were their own place and came when he called them in the solitude of darkness. Solitude, which to people not talented to deviate from the beaten track is the safe ground of mediocrity, without offending,

is to learning and genius the only sure labyrinth, tho' sometimes gloomy, to form the eagle wing that will bear one farther than Suns and Stars. Byron and Wordsworth have there best, and only *intensely*, burnished their pens. Would to Providence your unfoldings might be there— that it were not a wild and fruitless wish that you could be disunited from travelling with the souls of other men, of living and breathing, reading and writing with one vital time-sated idea— *their opinions!* So close was this conjunction that a certain pilgrim lived for some months in an eclipse so monotonous as scarcely to discern the disk of her own particular star. Could a mind return to its first fortunate seclusion, where it opened with its own peculiar colours and spread them out on its own rhymy pallette [sic], with its added stock, and spread them beneath the cross, what a mercy to the age! That religion so poetical, so philosophical, so adapted to unfold the understanding, when studied 'where sublime sentiments and actions spring from the desire which Genius always possesses of breaking those bounds which circumscribe the imagination. The heroism of morals, the enthusiasm of eloquence, the love of an eternal fame are supernatural enjoyments allotted only to minds which are

at once exalted and melancholy, and wearied and disgusted with everything transitory and bounded. This disposition of mind is the source of every generous passion and philosophical discovery.' Would this description of character, which I have copied from a glorious author, suit even our boasted Everett? Is he not completely enveloped in foreign matters and an artificial character? I am glad that his notice has fallen on Edward, who will be for flinging his light on a civil profession [rather] than on another destiny. . . . Those 'gospels of thought and wisdom' which you find so gossamer, —. . . two or three old books contain everything grand for me. Yet you call this age the ripest. Where are its Martyrs? Where was an age since Christianity, when the public mind had less hold of the strongest of all truths? The mass will ever be in swaddlings, and there ever have been great minds, so I cannot see clearly the comparison between infancy and age. The arts not equalled; and even Milton casting an eye toward Ovid and Virgil, which seems less bearable than towards Homer.

. . . I would remind your Grace — tho' but an Abbess of a humble Vale — that the triple bow was never seen before the Deluge; nor is it

a legend. There were no rains in those regions, or none heavy enow to give the binding of that flowery verge, before the alteration the flood caused. St. Pierre favours this. Rich as is the triple bow of promise (and it has been seen bending on the grave of long buried friendship) it would lose its best beauty, even if the Commentators' restoring it as a *Covenant bow* were just. I am glad to spew out a scrap of learning to your science-ship in revenge for your speaking of my moral scrawls and Sybilline scraps. In truth I have nothing of the old Eld but as many sands which I fear. The better part of the flattering letter I receive as a token of kindness. It was ingeniously done to write so well on my old almanacks. And I never reject handsome compliment, for the only thing would occur to you, what possible interest would any one have in flattering me. Yet in solitude it is not necessary, as in society, where even the oars of life can hardly be kept in motion without. But if you tax me with any payment in the course of this letter, why, take it as debt or due to merit, for it is always passable in the best society." . . .

R. W. E. TO MISS EMERSON

April 30, 1824.

. . . Is not life merely a sort of perpetual motion? One identical restlessness in all the individuals, but applied by the artist to many works, — as steam will turn a spit, or propel a man of war? Different trades thrive at different periods, and capital is converted occasionally from one to the other. Ten centuries ago, the human machines in Europe were all busy as wheels can be in killing man, destroying libraries, extirpating art, justice, and mercy. Today, with the same reckless activity, good is done, books are written and read, useful and elegant institutions reared, manners are polished and morals revered. Colleges take the place of schools, a sage of an hero. German, Saxon, Hun, Dane, in dusty gowns and darkened cloisters, by an odd revolution of fortune are at this moment exploring with critical acumen the rude antiquity, the manners, origin, and the war-path of their ancestors, and evincing, it may be, as much intrepidity and unconquerable pride in pedant argument as did their forefathers when they clashed their bucklers in the tented field. No change of manners leaves Heaven without a

witness, and Luitprand and St. Gregory and St., etc., are represented today by Dr. Channing, Dr. Chalmers, etc. But for cannibal Saracens, have come up critical scholars ; for paynim giants locking their dungeons, have come up Howards, opening the dungeon doors. The use of the safety-lamp, of the compass and of the press supersede the talismans and charlatanry of superstition. For Attila has come Wilberforce, and for Alaric, Franklin.

The religious spirit was the excess of that day, and Europe was depopulated in seven unsuccessful crusades. Spirit of liberty is the fashion of this age, and we have had our unsuccessful crusades. Naples, Spain and Greece are the coveted holy lands of modern chivalry. I am glad to remark how much more Reason is the friend of our hopes than of theirs.

Is man the result of men, or a mushroom exotic in every land? Was Dr. Franklin (one of the most sensible men that ever lived) as likely to be born elsewhere as at Boston and in 17—? Don't you admire (I am not sure you do) the serene and powerful understanding which was so eminently practical and useful, which grasped the policy of the globe, and the form of a fly, with like felicity and ease; which seemed to be a

transmigration of the Genius of Socrates — yet more useful, more moral, and more pure, and a living contradiction of the buffoonery that mocked a philosophy in the clouds? Franklin was no "Seraphic Doctor," no verbal gladiator clad in complete mail of syllogisms, but a sage who used his pen with a dignity and effect which was new, and had been supposed to belong only to the sword. He was a man of that singular force of mind (with which in the course of Providence so few men are gifted) which seems designed to effect by individual influence what is ordinarily done by the slow and secret work of institutions and national growth. One enjoys a higher conception of human worth in measuring the vast influence exercised on men's minds by Franklin's character than even by reading books of remote ages. Homer has indeed triumphed over time, but a poem is, at best, a work of art, and is seen ever with the same cold eyes that survey a marble statue or Italian painting. Whoever found, of all the generations of the readers of Homer — where is the madcap? — that his conduct in life was ruled or biassed one moment after merry boyhood by the blind bard's genius? I own I have read somewhere (perchance in Foster's Essays) such an

opinion avowed, but it smacked of extravagance then, and smacks now. But many millions have already lived and millions are now alive who have felt through their whole lives the powerful good effect both of Franklin's actions and his writings. His subtle observation, his seasonable wit, his profound reason and his mild and majestic virtues made him idolized in France, feared in England, and obeyed in America. Providence seemed to send him in our hour of need, qualified extraordinarily for an extraordinary service. Nor is it easy to limit the fame of the influence of those who thus mightily act on society. His good offices reach through a thousand years to posterity unborn, who will bless the builders of this Doric temple of liberty. Moses and Aaron, priests and Levites, led out the people into the appointed land, but, long after, God anointed a wise king, the wisest of men, to settle the foundations of civil prosperity and erect an altar to Himself. . . .

MYSELF (*continued*)

May 2d, 1824.

It puzzles and mortifies the bounding spirit to be brought so soon to a goal. A choice of three professions, in either of which but a small

portion of time is professedly devoted to the analysis of those high relations which unite us to God, and those inexplicably curious cords that fasten us to matter. Men's creeds can never, at least in youth, set the heart entirely at ease. They strike the eye ever and anon as fine-spun textures through which rebellious doubt is impatient, sometimes desperate, to plunge. There is a dreaminess about my mode of life (which may be a depravity) which loosens the tenacity of what should be most tenacious — this my grasp on heaven and earth. I am the servant more than the master of my fates. They seem to lead me into many a slough where I do no better than despond. And as to the life I lead, and the works and the days, I should blush to recite the unprofitable account. But prophets and philosophers assure me that I am immortal, and sometimes my own imagination goes into a fever with its hopes and conceptions. Tell me, my soul, if this be true, if these indolent days and frivolous nights, these insignificant accomplishments, this handful of thought, this pittance of virtues, are to form my trust and claim on an existence as imperishable as my Maker's. There is no such thing accorded to the universal prayer of man as satisfactory knowledge. Metaphysics

teach me admirably well what I knew before; setting out in order particular after particular, bone after bone, the anatomy of the mind. My knowledge is thus arranged, not augmented. Morals, too, — the proud science which departs at once from the lower creation about which most of man's philosophy is conversant, and professes to deal with his sublimest connexions and separate destiny, — morals are chiefly occupied in discriminating between what is general and what is partial, or in tying rules together by a thread which is called a system or a principle. But neither metaphysics nor ethics are more than outside sciences. They give me no insight into the nature and design of my being, and the profoundest scholar in them both is as far from any clue to the Being and the work behind the scenes, as the Scythian or the Mohawk. For Morals and Metaphysics, Cudworth and Locke may both be true, and every system of religion yet offered to man wholly false. To glowing hope, moreover, 't is alarming to see the full and regular series of animals from mites and worms up to man; yet he who has the same organization and a little more mind pretends to an insulated and extraordinary destiny to which his fellows of the stall and field are in no part ad-

mitted, nay are disdainfully excluded.[1] . . . But for myself, wo is me! these poor and barren thoughts are the best in my brain—

"The glow
That in my spirit dwelt is fluttering faint and low."

I am ambitious not to live in a corner, or, which is tenfold perdition, to be contemptible in a corner. Meantime my prospect is no better; my soul is dark or is dead. I will hope "She is not dead, but sleepeth."

ASIA

Sleep on, ye drowsy tribes whose old repose
The roaring oceans of the East enclose;
Old Asia, nurse of man, and bower of gods,
The dragon Tyranny with crown and ball
Chants to thy dreams his ancient lullaby.

LETTER TO PLATO

The voice of antiquity has proclaimed, most venerable Shade, that if the Father of the Gods should converse with men he would speak in the language of Plato. In cloisters and colleges, lovers of philosophy are found to this day who repeat this praise. But the revolution of ages has

1 This is, perhaps, the first hint of his coming interest in Evolution.

introduced other tongues into the world and the dialect of Attica is well-nigh forgotten. Rome succeeded to the honours of Greece; Italy, France and England to the power and refinement of Rome, and the children of the proud republicans who disgraced Xerxes, defied Asia, and instructed all Europe, are now cooped up in a corner of their patrimony, making a desperate stand for their lives against a barbarous nation whose bondmen they have been. In these circumstances, the pillars of the Porch have been broken and the groves of the Academy felled to the ground. Philosophy discourses in another language, and, though the messages of Deity are brought to men, they come in terms, as well as on topics, to which you, illustrious Athenian(?), were a stranger. In this old age of the world, I shall therefore speak to the spirit of Plato in a new language, but in one whereinto has long been transfused all the wealth of ancient thought, enriched, and perchance outweighed, by productions of modern genius. I may add that I live in a land which you alone prophesied to your contemporaries, where is founded a political system more wise and successful than Utopia or the Atlantis.

You have now dwelled in the land of souls

upwards of twenty centuries, and in the meantime mightier changes than those to which I have already alluded have appeared on earth. I have no design to interrupt your serene repose with the weary annals of political convulsion. These were always alike, and the fortunes of ages may be told from an infancy as brief as man's life. The desperate state of the Greek Republic concerns me not; it has long ceased to touch yourself. I write of higher revolutions and vaster communities. I write of the moral and religious condition of man.

As the world has grown older, the theory of life has grown better, while a correspondent improvement in practice has not been observed. Eighteen hundred years ago a Revelation came down from heaven which distinctly declared the leading principles of ethics, and that in so clear and popular a form that the very terms in which they were conveyed served the most illiterate as well as the great and wise for a manual, a Rule of life. The book which contains this divine message has done more than any other to sap the authority — I might say, to sweep away the influence — of Socrates and his disciple. Men still commend your wisdom, for indeed, Plato, thou reasonest well, but Christ and his apostles

infinitely better, — not through thy fault, but through their inspiration. Thus a religious revolution has taken place in the midst of civilized nations, more radical and extensive than any other which ever came, be it religious, scientific or political. Men are now furnished with creeds, animated by all the motives a gospel offers, and they look back with pity on the proud attainments of the *pagan* Plato and his emulous successors, and around upon the living pagan nations of the East and West. This Dispensation of the Supreme Being is expounded and enforced to all classes of men by a regular priesthood.

That priesthood finds riddles in their vocation hard to solve, wonders not easy to digest. They examine with curious inquiry public annals and private anecdotes of your age to ascertain the just level to which human virtue had then arisen; to find how general were integrity, temperance, and charity; to find how much the gods were reverenced; and then to compare accurately the result with the known condition of modern Europe and America. For it is not believed possible by those living under the influence of such new and puissant principles as our gospel hath erected, that any high standard could have obtained of thought or action under the patron-

age of your gaudy and indecent idolatry. But now and then a scholar whose midnight lamp is regularly lit to unfold your spirit, appeals from the long mythology which the poets forged, to your own lofty speculations on the nature of the Gods and the obligations to virtue—which Christianity hath rather outstripped than contradicted; when a scholar appeals from that to these for the true belief of good men, your contemporaries, he is told that the mass of men regarded your pages as fine-spun theories, unsanctioned, unpractical, untrue; that you, Plato, did not know if there were many gods or but One; that you inculcated the observance of the vulgar superstitions of the day. If the law of the universe admitted of exception, and it were allowed me to depart to your refulgent shores and commune with Plato, this is the information I should seek at your hands. How could those parts of the social machine whose consistency and just action depends entirely upon the morality and religion sown and grown in the community, how could these be kept in safe and efficient arrangement under a system which, besides being frivolous, was the butt of vulgar ridicule?

Is it necessary that men should have before them the strong excitement of religion and its

thrilling motives? One who was accustomed to constant pressure of their yoke would pronounce it indispensable. It was so specially made for man and blends so intimately with his nature and habits that it is difficult for the believer to conceive of unbelief. Nay, the influence seems to spread a great deal wider and to affect all those who belong to a religious country, though the predominance of these feelings be no part of their character. But 't is very possible that this may be illusory and it seems to me if we study the particular actions making up the aggregate which we call character, and abandon generalities, we shall find that there is a great self-deception practised daily in society where gospels are promulged, and that the proneness of men to judge of themselves by their best moments, combining with that unqualified approbation which every moral being must needs yield to a system so pure, leads men to suspect that the deeds they do from a broad view of their interest, they do from religious motives and a powerful bias to Virtue.

It is a favourite point, Plato, with our divines, to argue from the misery and vice anciently prevalent in the world, a certain necessity of the Revelation. Of this Revelation I am the ardent

friend. Of the Being who sent it I am the child, and I trust I am disposed from reason and affection with the whole force of my understanding, the warmth of my heart, and the constant attention of all my life, to practise the duties there enjoined and to help its diffusion throughout the globe. But I confess it has not for me the same exclusive and extraordinary claims it has for many. I hold Reason to be a prior Revelation, and that they do not contradict each other. I conceive that the Creator addresses his messages to the minds of his children, and will not mock them by acting upon their moral character by means of motives which are wild and unintelligible to them. The assent which fear and superstition shall extort from them to words or rites or reasons which they do not understand, since it makes a ruin of the mind, can please none but a cruel and malicious divinity. The belief of such a god and such sublime depravity is absurd. His house is divided against itself. His house, his universe, cannot stand. The errand which the true God sends, which men have hoped to receive, which philosophers waited for in your Porches and Schools,—must be worthy of him, or it will be rejected as a mountebank's tales and wonders. What we do not apprehend,

we first admire, and then ridicule. Therefore I scout all these parts of the book which are reckoned mysteries.

But one of the greatest of these is of external, rather than internal, character, by which the Revelation is made but a portion of a certain great scheme planned from eternity in heaven to be slowly developed on earth. It is made essential to the economy of Providence and necessary to the welfare of man. I need not inform you in all its depraved details of the theology under whose chains Calvin of Geneva bound Europe down; but this opinion, that the Revelation had become necessary to the salvation of men through some conjunction of events in heaven, is one of its vagaries. This is one which, from whatever cause, has lingered in men's minds after the rest of that family of errors disappeared. And sober and sensible theologians speak of the ages preceding the event as a long preparation for it, and of the whole history of man as only relative to it. The cases are so few in which we can see connexion and order in events, by reason of the narrow field of our vision, that we are glad in our vanity if we can solder with our imaginations into a system, things in fact unconnected, can turn the ravishment of devotion or poetry

into prophecies, by searching up and down in the great garner of history for an event that will chime with a prediction.

THE GREEKS

. . . The Grecian genius did not start into life with the victories of Salamis and Platæa, but was born and disciplined before Homer sang.

AMERICA

When this country is censured for its foolhardy ambition to take a stand in its green years among old and proud nations, it is no reproach and no disqualification to be told, But you have no literature. It is admitted we have none. But we have what is better. We have a government and a national spirit that is better than poems or histories, and these have a premature ripeness that is incompatible with the rapid production of the latter. We should take shame to ourselves as sluggish and Bœotian if it were righteously said that we had done nothing for ourselves, neither in learning, nor arts, nor government, nor political economy. But we see and feel that in the space of two generations this nation has taken such a start as already to outstrip the bold freedom of modern speculation

which ordinarily (universally, but for this case) is considerably in advance of practice. No man calls Mr. Hume an old-fashioned and short-sighted politician, yet many pages of his history have lost their credit already by the practical confutation of their principles. 'T is no disgrace to tell Newton he is no poet, nor America even.

MANNERS[1]

Pericles, Cæsar, Chesterfield, Henry IV of France. It certainly is worth one's while, who considers what sway elegant manners bear in society, and how wealth, genius and moral worth, all extrinsic and intrinsic good in men, do, in society, feel their empire, — it becomes a clear command of reason to cultivate them. There are some men, wittily called Nature's Gentlemen, who need no discipline, but grow straight up into shape and grace and can match the proudest in dignified demeanour and the gentlest in courtesy. Of these the line in the old song is a thousand times quoted,

"My face 's my fortune, Sir, she said."

. . . I speak here of no transient success in

1 Compare the Motto to essay on "Behaviour" (*Conduct of Life*), also printed in *Poems*.

tying a neckcloth aright, and making a fashionable bow, and speaking in the precise nick of time, and the just length, but of manners of a sensible man when they become the chief channel in which a man's sense runs; of those which are the plain index of fine sense and fine feelings, which impress all and offend none. The specimens of this sort are to be searched for in the summits of society,—for these manners are invariably successful,—or among the young, not yet advanced. They had better be observed in youth, for there is nothing in art or nature so charming as the brilliant manners of one of these candidates for eminence before adulation has got to be an old song with him, while hope and love dazzle him. Their address is marked by an alacrity of manner arising from elasticity of spirits and of limbs that no eye can watch unmoved. The spectacle these afford is a perfect tonic in its physical effect, like light, or like wine. It imparts an impulse of cheerfulness not easily withstood to all within their influence; it effaces for a moment the omnipresent consciousness of sin, sickness, sorrow. It is an attractive subject. . . . "Many men," said Montaigne, "I have known of supercelestial opinions and subterranean manners." . . .

. . . Manners is a fourth fine art, and, like Painting, Poetry and Sculpture, is founded on fiction. It is a mask worn by men of sense to deceive the vulgar, ape the conduct of every superior intelligence. Thus I know models who affect to drop carelessly the most subtle wit or profound thought. Every virtue is spoken of with respect, even those to which their private life bears little love. Every event is treated with its exact measure of interest, — sickness and death, a balloon and a butterfly, being discussed with the same cool philosophy.

In the practice of these wise masters I know different theories of manners prevail, and are as many as the systems of philosophy — for this is a species of second philosophy, and may be termed the philosophy of life. Thus the sect of the Stoics will have their mannerists who would command in good company by inflexible reception of good and ill. Democritus has many, even Heraclitus a few. Socrates has some disciples, who use plain speech and practical as J. L., but the predominant sect are those who hold fast with the Epicureans, — independent and good-humoured.

BOOKS

. . . Apart from the vastness of transitory volumes which occasional politics or a thousand ephemeral magnalia elicit, . . . there is another sort of book which appears now and then in the world, once in two or three centuries perhaps, and which soon or late gets a foothold in popular esteem. I allude to those books which collect and embody the wisdom of their times, and so mark the stages of human improvement. Such are the Proverbs of Solomon, the Essays of Montaigne, and eminently the Essays of Bacon. Such also (though in my judgment in far less degree) is the proper merit of Mr. Pope's judicious poems, the Moral Essays and Essay on Man, which, without originality, seize upon all the popular speculations floating among sensible men and give them in a compact graceful form to the following age. I should like to add another volume to this valuable work. I am not so foolhardy as to write *Sequel to Bacon* on my title-page; and there are some reasons that induce me to suppose that the undertaking of this enterprise does not imply any censurable arrogance. . . . It may be made clear that there may be the Wisdom of an Age, independent of and

above the Wisdom of any individual whose life is numbered in its years. And the diligence rather than the genius of one mind may compile the prudential maxims, domestic and public maxims current in the world and which may be made to surpass the single stores of any writer, as the richest private funds are quickly exceeded by a public purse.

CONCLUSION

Why has my motley diary no jokes? Because it is a soliloquy and every man is grave alone.

I. There is no royal road to Learning.

II. Let not your virtue be of the written or spoken sort, but of the practised.

III. The two chief differences among men (touching the talents) consist, 1, in the different degrees of *attention* they are able to command; 2, in the unlike expression they give to the same ideas.

IV. There is time enough for every business men are really resolved to do.

V. *Obsta principiis.* Take heed of getting cloyed with that honeycomb which Flattery tempts with. 'T is apt to blunt the edge of appetite for many wholesome viands, and rob you of many days of health.

Let no man flatter himself with the hope of true good or solid enjoyment from the *study* of Shakspeare or Scott. Enjoy them as recreation. You cannot please yourself by going to stare at the moon; 't is beautiful when in your *course* it comes.

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